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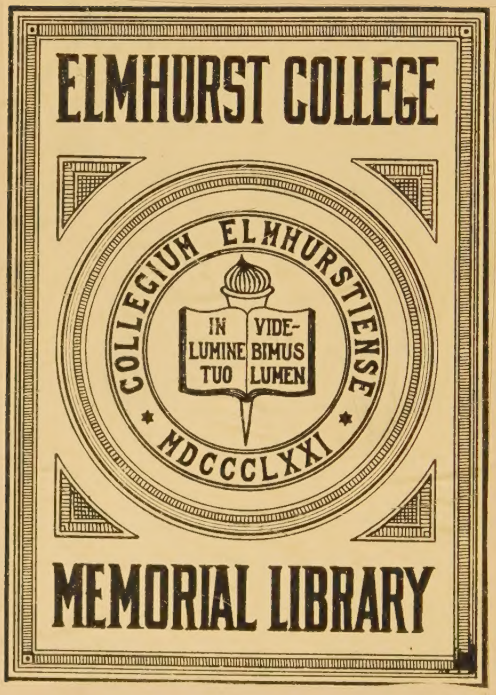
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SOME ASPECTS OF
THE LIFE OF JESUS

FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHO-ANALYTIC POINT OF VIEW

BY

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PREFACE

It is not the object of this work to repeat what has already been said, and well said, by others. It makes no attempt to follow that fashion of modern erudition which delights in reopening questions that have been settled in order to settle them again with a great parade of impressive citations. Nor does it attempt either to raise or to solve all the theological, critical, or practical problems which the Life of Jesus presents. Its aim is at once more modest and quite different.

Having had occasion to investigate, during a course of lectures at the University of Geneva, some aspects both of the so-called primitive religions and of the Oriental religions that invaded the Roman Empire at about the same period as Christianity, the author was much struck with the unexpected light which the new methods in psychology cast upon these religions and with the very suggestive resemblances between them which these methods brought to the surface. Since then a deeply cherished inclination has impelled him to attempt to apply these methods to that great event which, for nearly twenty centuries, and because it ordains and directs the evolution of the human conscience, has dominated the history of the world.

In the face of the deformations to which the churches themselves have only too often subjected Christianity, it is supremely interesting to return once more to the original documents which we possess concerning Christ and to focus upon this great figure all the lights of modern science. It is obvious that researches in this domain must be con-

ducted with great prudence and with the utmost humility.

There are some minds that will perhaps fail to find in these pages what they are seeking: a re-statement, a sifting, and a solution, in the traditional scholastic manner, of the questions raised by the theologians. This is not because the author is unaware of the value of the exegetical and critical method of work, or because he attaches small importance to it. On the contrary, he will avail himself of it in large measure wherever this labour has arrived at certainties, or at least at conclusions that have a high degree of probability; but it has seemed to him that there is a better course than to retrace forever the beaten paths. On such a subject no source of investigation ought to be neglected. Beside theology there is room for psychology. The author will therefore attempt to apply the method and the discoveries of the latter to certain aspects of the life of Jesus, not with any pretence of arriving at definite conclusions, but rather with the less ambitious hope of understanding a little better a history which, for the very reason that it interests us in the highest degree, distresses us at times because it still contains, as many feel, so much that is obscure and remote.

The following pages were not planned with the intention of publication. They formed the subject of a course of lectures delivered at the University of Geneva during the winter term of 1917 and the summer term of 1919. To this is due their rather abrupt and informal character. When one's desire is not so much to produce a definitive work as to arouse reflection, to invite corrections and to stimulate the production of more complete works, it is better to give one's thoughts immediately to the public rather than to await indefinitely the sacred hour when irrefutable conclusions will detach themselves from it as ripe fruit falls from a withering tree. It is by passing from hand to hand

that the torch of life keeps its flame; by retaining it too long one runs the risk of handing on to those who come after one nothing but a few ashes and a little burned-out rosin. With these feelings, the author offers the present volume to souls who seek, love, and labour, in the hope that their researches, their love, and their labour may extend its lines and fill in some of its lacunæ.

May he be permitted to recall, with great respect, these words of a master whose last lectures he had the privilege of hearing:

"Our theology in the French tongue takes particular delight in the external sphere of material and historical fact, either in order to defend it with the arguments of authority or to attack it with the arguments of critics; it tends to avoid the inner world; one would say it was not familiar with this world, that it did not feel at home there.

"It must be brought back to it, acclimated in it, made fast to it. It must understand the nature of that faith which is not sight, that faith which is based on the inward aspirations, the primordial conditions of the spiritual life, the feeling of personality, of life, of plenitude, of glory. To move in this world of faith is to find it more real, more living, much more real, more living than the other; and by moving in it, by surveying it, by investigating it one reaps as much edification as enjoyment. Let us turn our religious and theological thought in this direction. But if we are to advance here we must desire neither to be orthodox nor to be liberal; we must desire to be *intrinsically Christian,* that is to say theologians to whom nothing that is inward and true in orthodoxy is alien but whose method remains that of a sovereign liberalism. I mean by this last word the truly independent liberalism of a spirit that has freely arrived and firmly taken its stand at the heart of things, and that has not allowed itself to be turned aside

either by fanatics or by literal-minded detractors. May I be allowed, in closing, to wish such a spirit for the younger generation!" [1]

[1] Bouvier, Aug., *Dogmatique chrétienne, publiée d'après le cours manuscrit et les notes de l'auteur par Edouard Montet.* Paris, Fischbacher, 1903,, vol. II, pp. 122-123.

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INTRODUCTION

Most of the Lives of Jesus which have been published begin with more or less lengthy considerations of the antecedents of the gospel history. They try to envisage the life of Christ from a double point of view, that of the history of religions and that of the history of Israel. We shall disregard here everything that concerns Judaism and the religion of the Old Testament, not because we do not consider that it presents a problem, and a most important problem, but simply because the question has been very satisfactorily and adequately treated and because its elements are easily accessible to those who wish to investigate it.[1]

For the same reason we do not consider it incumbent on us to write a detailed historical treatise on the religions which ended and, as it were, reached their summit in Christianity. It has seemed to us more interesting to give our special attention to the Greco-Roman paganism under the form which it had assumed at the moment when Christianity entered into direct relations with it, that is to say the Mystery-Religions. Here again we have no intention of describing in detail the vast movement of thought and affectivity which took shape in Hellenistic syncretism and the Mystery-Religions.[2] We shall confine ourselves to indicating in a note the sources from which one may draw in order

[1] Cf. the various Lives of Jesus in French, German and English (bibliography at the end of the volume).

[2] Such a description, to be interesting, would require considerable space. We have made it the subject of a course of lectures which might serve in a way as an introduction to this book but which we cannot think of transcribing here.

to form an idea of it, and we shall assume that our readers are familiar with the principal aspects of that great current which, in the first centuries of our era, came to mingle its waters with those of the Christian current.

It may be added that if we have been led to dwell on the Mystery-Religions it is not because of the *historical influence* they may have had on Christianity, but rather because of the identity of the *psychological* development that one observes in both these movements.

As a matter of fact, almost everything has already been said that can be said about history and historical influences. On the other hand, a great deal remains to be said about the psychology of paganism as well as that of Christianity, and about their relations. Here the question is not so much one of reciprocal influences as of a similarity in psychological processes, a question of analogy and parallelism in development. If, as Tertullian said, "the soul is naturally Christian," one should find the traces of this "nature" in paganism itself, and it appears indeed as if this might be the case. It is therefore a *psychological* and not a *historical* interest that has led us to insert in this introduction a section on the Mystery-Religions; and this quite special direction of our interest suffices also to explain and justify the omissions of which we have already spoken.

CHAPTER I

METHOD

§ 1. THEOLOGY

UNTIL about the middle of the nineteenth century, it was the custom to consider religion and the different religions as so many intellectual verities the grounds of which were to be demonstrated or rejected by means of logic. Christian theologians sought to prove the superiority of Christianity to the other religions by establishing the superior value of its dogmas, supporting the truth of these dogmas on proofs of an intellectual order. Save for a few exceptions (for example, those mystic souls who insisted and have always insisted upon the life and the reasons of the heart) every one believed that the essential thing in religion was to remain convinced of the legitimacy of certain intellectual beliefs. Such is the *dogmatic conception* of religion. "All the religions which preceded Christianity are false and inferior," said the theologians, "because their dogmas, their rites, their beliefs, their ceremonies are either ridiculous or cruel, or bear the stamp of superstition, or are morally false." The variations on this theme were, to be sure, very numerous and of many shades, but they all led back, consciously or unconsciously, to the same *leitmotiv:* religion, and every religion, is an assemblage of truths or errors which reveal themselves as true or false to an intelligence that is sufficiently skilled to judge them.

Let it not be supposed that this conception has been altogether abandoned even to-day. It remains that of the great mass of the people; it is undoubtedly still maintained by many ministers and preachers; it forms the basis of all

sorts of apologetical efforts which, though often clumsy, are very well-intentioned. We may add that it is responsible for the ruin of many sincere lives which have run aground on this rock of intellectualism in the sphere of religion and which, unable to arrive at an intellectual synthesis of their personal experiences and the dogmas of Christianity, have made it a matter of conscience to relinquish a faith which they have not always been able to understand.

The best of our Protestant theologians, however, have already appealed for another method and centred their hopes upon its appearance.[1] Gaston Frommel, speaking of a special point in the Christian experience, exclaims: "A great deal might be said on this point; there are many observations that might be made about it which, alas, have not yet been made, made, I mean, with due method and rigour. In these matters Christian theology is still on trial. It has never done what the natural sciences have done: it has not profited by the treasure of the experiences of eighteen centuries of faith which have made Christianity a part of humanity. It has remained doctrinaire, speculative or cautiously historical, instead of becoming inductive. It has not yet arrived at the exact and rigorously scientific results which it might have reached if it had made use of the accumulated riches of the hundreds and thousands of Christian lives that have been lived from the first centuries down to our own day. As a result, lacking the records and the carefully attested, verified, and classified facts, it is obliged, when it enters this domain (which is that of the theology of the future), to take its stand upon commonplace generalities or those mere instinctive presuppositions which can always be disputed. . . ."

[1] Schleiermacher was the first to open the way, but his efforts were necessarily tentative.

And he adds that this work will be accomplished, not in a day or by one man, but by hundreds working together.[2]

§ 2. PSYCHOLOGY

At the moment when Frommel uttered these words a movement was already taking shape that was to meet the desire which he expressed and supply the want which he was pointing out. This movement was born almost at the same time in several different countries and set out to approach religious phenomena in a different fashion from that which had been employed hitherto. In Germany, Wundt and his school were beginning to study the religious modes and customs of primitive peoples as a branch of ethnology.

In America, James, Leuba, Stanley Hall, and others who followed them, adopting a more individualistic method, were gathering observations of all sorts, grouping them, analysing them and, while taking great pains to avoid any preconceived theory in regard to them, claiming their right to describe them in the same way and as of the same general character as other psychic phenomena. Little by little the *Psychology of Religion* was taking form; it was creating its own method of investigation and demanding its rights. It has now come forward with a sufficient list of works to its credit, and works whose value is sufficiently substantial for us to give this new science serious consideration.

Now the whole character of these books and their general tendency have contributed to give the cultivated public a new idea of religion. In the light of these works religion to-day appears to us as a *branch of the mental activity of humanity*. We can no longer separate it from the general

[2] G. Frommel. *La vérité humaine.* St.-Blaise, Foyer solidariste, 1910, II, p. 252.

field of psychic experiences. When this word *religion* is pronounced in our presence we no longer see a group of dogmatic ideas, doctrines, or truths which are isolated from others and the verity of which must be demonstrated by means of reason; rather it suggests to us individual or collective psychic phenomena, such as conversion, regeneration, religious awakenings, mass movements, etc., which are to be observed and described dispassionately and with as much exactitude as possible. Religious psychology seems to have given the death-blow to the syllogistic and scholastic conception of religion. It will become increasingly difficult for a mind with any cultivation to hold these antiquated views; less and less shall we be able to consider religion apart from the rest of human life, relegating it to a separate compartment. Henceforward we shall be obliged to examine it in its constant relations with all the rest of the mental and physiological life of man.

Religious psychology has revealed to us a fact of the highest importance which we have long divined, namely, that religion, far from being a truth external to man, which he must swallow like a pill, is attached, on the contrary, to the most intimate fibres of his being, that it is closely bound up with all that is deepest in his nature and comes to him from within. Man is a religious being in the same way that he is a being who thinks, wills, and feels. Man becomes religious not because, at a certain moment of his development, he has encountered a certain group of dogmatic ideas, doctrines, or formulas which he has been pleased to adopt, but first and foremost because his desires, needs, and feelings—one whole side of his psychic life—impel him in the direction of the religion which he adopts. The religion does not exist in the dogmas, the doctrines, and the ceremonies before it exists in the man himself. It is because it exists first in the psychic life of the individual

that he later finds it again, so to speak, and accepts it in the intellectual systems that are presented to him or in the ceremonies and the rites which respond to his conscious or unconscious aspirations.

Psychology differs from theology, then, in that it rests on a scientific basis: the observation and the classification of facts. Theology, on the contrary, has as a rule quite another foundation: it is based on the admitted truth of certain beliefs, certain doctrines, a theory that is preconceived or accepted by virtue of an act of faith, and it seeks to demonstrate the truth and the soundness of this theory.

A Christian theologian, for example, will approach the person of Jesus with the design of demonstrating that he is indeed the Saviour to whom the faith of the Church clings, and that she is right in considering him as such, that he fulfils the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and other related questions.

A psychologist, on the other hand, will not concern himself with these questions at all. He will approach the religious manifestations of such and such a hero or founder of a religion as he would approach those of any other man; he will seek to analyse them as facts, to relate them to other similar facts, to compare the one series of facts with the other; then, if any conclusion results from these analyses and comparisons, he will accept it and range it in its proper place among the data which he has acquired, whether it contradicts or whether it confirms the faith of this or that religious group.

The psychology of religion, then, studies facts, not ideas, states of consciousness, not doctrines. It aims to remain scientific; it concerns itself not with religion but with religious phenomena, and it seeks to discover the laws by which they arise and develop, disregarding the entire metaphysical question and taking cognisance, not of the first

cause, but of the secondary causes alone. In this sense we may say that the psychology of religion is much more disinterested than theology; it is not in the service of any creed; it is not in the service of anybody. But we must not look to it for edification; it has nothing of that sort to give. It limits itself to arranging, classifying, observing, and drawing conclusions. It is for the individual to utilize its results as best he may according to his own needs and to discover how they may serve him in clarifying or modifying his personal conceptions.

In his latest book, *The Psychology of Religion*,[3] one of the best known of the American psychologists, George Coe, touches on a point that interests us particularly inasmuch as it answers the preliminary question implied in the study we are undertaking to-day: "Has psychology the right to concern itself with *persons?*" The tendency of some psychologists might lead us to suppose that it has not. Considering the insistence with which a number of them lay stress on the fact that we are concerned in psychology only with states of consciousness, one might suppose that the "I," individuality, is for them something that is non-existent or unattainable. Theoretically this point of view may be upheld. It is evident that strict psychological observation always has to do with this or that state of mind of which it happens to be examining the conditions, the structure, and the consequences independently of the person who experiences that state of mind. From this one might conclude that the person is non-existent, or at least a negligible quantity. Here again it is an American who comes to save us from academic pedantry with his strong common sense and his clear, candid vision of realities. Mr. George Coe distinguishes, in the psychology of religion, two different forms, *two types of research:*

[3] *The Psychology of Religion.* University of Chicago Press, 1916.

I. Sometimes the problem is one of separating the elements of a religious experience which comprises a great number of varied psychic data; we then place ourselves at what Coe calls *the structural point of view*. This, for example, is what Starbuck [4] has done in examining the various states of consciousness which, taken together, constitute conversion; it is also what Leuba[5] and Delacroix [6] have done in connection with mysticism, and King,[7] Pratt,[8] and Durckheim [9] in connection with the genesis and the growth of religion in the individual and in the race.

II. But this is not the whole story. Religion is not merely an assemblage of states of consciousness of a special kind; it is also a struggle with destiny; it is directed towards an end, towards an aim; the devotee is in search of something, he follows a plan. Religion has a certain connection with the evaluating phase of experience, with the side of life which is concerned with the meaning of things. This also we must take into account; and in doing so we find ourselves adopting a new point of view which Coe calls

[4] Starbuck, E. D., *The Psychology of Religion.* 2nd edition, London, Scott, 1901.

[5] Leuba, J., *Les tendances religieuses chez les mystiques chrétiens.* Rev. philos., LIV, 1902, pp. 1-36 and 441-487.

Id., *The Psychology of the Christian Mystics.* Mind, N. S., XIV, pp. 15-27.

[6] Delacroix, *Essai sur le mysticisme spéculatif en Allemagne au XIV^e siècle.* Paris, Alcan, 1900.

Id., *Etudes d'histoire et de psychologie du mysticisme. Les grands mystiques chrétiens.* Paris, Alcan, 1908.

[7] King, J., *The Development of Religion: a Study in Anthropology and Social Psychology.* New York, Macmillan, 1910.

Id., *A Psychological Theory of the Origin of Religion.* New York, Acad. of Sc., 26 Feb., 1906.

[8] Pratt, J. B., *Concerning the Origin of Religion.* Amer. Jour. of Relig. Psych., II, p. 257.

Id., *The Psychology of Religious Belief.* New York, Macmillan, 1907.

[9] Durckheim, E., *De la définition des phénomènes religieux.* An. sociol., II, pp. 1-28.

Id., *Examen critique des systèmes classiques sur les origines de la pensée religieuse.* Rev. philos., LXVII, 1909, pp. 10-15.

Id., *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse. Le système totémique en Australie.* Paris, Alcan, 1912.

the functional point of view. Psychology should adopt this as well, and as a matter of fact it does so. "For," says Coe, "the concrete experience out of which we abstract the '*states of consciousness*' (we desire to study) is the experience of being a personal self. Each sensation, feeling, or other 'element' of structural psychology is simply a particular discriminable aspect of a self-realising life." [10] From the *psychology of states of consciousness* it is inevitable, therefore, that one should proceed to the *psychology of persons,* of the personal *I.*

These considerations lead Coe to a manner of looking at things which is interesting in connection with our present plan. In this way he corrects the somewhat narrow outlook of a purely scientific psychology that is concerned and desires to be concerned only with the structure of states of consciousness. He regards it as legitimate also to consider states of mind from the point of view of the value they possess in relation to society, society as a whole. This point of view enables us to establish distinctions not only between this and that state of mind but also between person and person. We are placed in a position to compare and evaluate persons; and this is important in our present inquiry.

It is evident that this point of view adopted by Coe lays itself open to the reproach of not being strictly scientific, inasmuch as science is concerned with measures and not with values. But to this objection one might reply that the very axioms upon which science rests are dictated by considerations of value. The most disinterested science is built up, in the last analysis, upon an interest; for in order to be able to know we must first pose hypotheses that will render the scientific structure possible: atoms, electrons, etc.

In approaching the great figure who is to form the sub-

[10] Coe, *The Psychology of Religion,* p. 19.

ject of this book we shall first meet with states of mind that have been produced in a very special environment, in the midst of a people with very strongly marked characteristics and during an epoch far removed from our own. We must study their structure and compare them with other states of mind that are nearer to our own and better known. But we shall not consider ourselves committed to an objectivity so strict as to prevent us from taking into account the fact that we are dealing here first and foremost with a *person,* a person who pursued certain aims and moved in a certain direction, and that, because of and through the intermediation of this person, new currents, new psychic functions have come into being in the world. "Jesus," says Renan, "had neither dogmas nor a system; he had a fixed personal resolution which, as it surpassed in intensity every other created will, directs to this day the destinies of humanity." [11] These are the words of a judge who, in criticism, did not allow himself to be easily checked. Yet they affirm the existence in Jesus of something, a personal character, a *fixed personal resolution,* which bore and still bears its consequences for humanity.

On the other hand, let us also note that to relate it with other human personalities does not in any way diminish the specific character of this personality. To bring comparative psychology to bear upon Jesus, to relate his states of consciousness, his feelings, his volitions, his impulsions, or his inhibitions with those which take place in all men, is not to solve the whole problem of his origin and his essence. The latter remains exactly as it was before, and for the following reason.

In the natural order, as we know, the same physical elements, differently grouped, may produce absolutely different results. Rain, snow, hail, ice are after all nothing but

[11] RENAN, *Vie de Jésus.* Paris, Calmann-Lévy, p. 48.

water. And yet, in concrete reality, how these things differ one from another in their effects, in their utility, in the use to which we can put them! When we decompose them we always find water; but, meanwhile, the rain has fertilised my soil, the ice has stopped the decomposition of my food, the snow has killed my friend, the hail has devastated my crops. "It's nothing but water, just the same!" a physicist may tell me. But to me, an ordinary man, this makes no difference; it does not interest me; it does not diminish in the slightest way the seriousness of the effects that have been produced.

Let us mount a step and enter psychology. There is no reason why we should be disturbed if, in a soul which we revere, in a person for whom we entertain the greatest respect, the psychological analysis happens to reveal to us a structure of psychic elements analogous to that of the simplest of mortals. As a matter of fact, there appears, under the new form assumed by this group of elements which constitute the originality of this personality, an imponderable something which is also a force, an energy, though of the spiritual order. From the psychological point of view this person is a human person of the same structure as other human persons; yet that which precisely distinguishes him from others, that something which I can compare to nothing else because it is peculiar to him, which it is impossible to analyse, which is perceptible only to the moral sense, is enough to confer upon him in my eyes a value, a significance, a place quite apart from that of other human beings. The secret of personality is always a divine secret; one never succeeds in isolating it by merely scientific labour. It will resist the most subtle analyses because it belongs to quite another order of things. We therefore do it no injury when we reduce to its known elements the composition of a human psyche.

To sum up what we have just said and render quite clear the methodological line that Coe has traced, let us formulate as follows the investigation that we are about to undertake:

1. The *structural* point of view will lead us to approach the life of Jesus, his psychic life, his states of consciousness, from the angle of their resemblance to our own. In this way we shall see in what respects he approximates to ourselves; we shall examine the functioning of his mind, his feelings, the hidden logic of his inner development, according to the laws which we have learned by our previous observations. In this way Jesus will appear to us chiefly under the aspect which he shares with men, with all men. We shall feel him living with the fulness of humanity, thanks to the numerous points of resemblance with our own which his psychology presents.

2. The *functional* point of view, on the other hand, by directing our attention to the particular aims which the person is pursuing, will cause us to observe whatever is original in this person, whatever is peculiar to him, in contrast to others. In the place of a *static* or *comparative* psychology, we shall be concerned here first and foremost with a *dynamic* psychology. We shall become aware of the ends towards which a personality such as that of Jesus moves, and in consequence we shall feel more sharply what separates him from others and less sharply what he has in common with them.

§ 3. PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

The principles and the methods of the psychology of religion [12] have rendered us an immense service by enlarging

[12] Cf. Flournoy, Th., *Les principes de la psychologie religieuse.* Arch. de Psychol., II, 1902, pp. 33-57.
Faber, Hermann, *Das Wesen der Religionpsychologie und Ihre Bedeutung für die Dogmatik, eine prinzipielle Untersuchung zur systematischen Theologei.* Tübingen, Mohr, 1913, p. 164.

the conceptions that we have held of religious phenomena, their character, and the laws under which they evolve in the spiritual life of man. But several years ago the great flood of observations flung by an early enthusiasm into the field of religious studies began to diminish. It was clearly seen that they would have to go deeper and the investigators were already attacking the subconscious layers of the personality without being able to penetrate to its secret. They were asking upon what, in the last analysis, the observed phenomena rested, from whence they sprang up in the bosom of the race. I am not speaking here of the metaphysical origins of religion which, by definition, lie outside the province of scientific investigation, but of its psychic and physiological origins, its points of attachment to the known being. The psychology of religion was on the verge of being swallowed up in the moving sands of statistics or special cases, when there suddenly appeared a new movement of ideas, a new method, rich in unforeseen consequences, which, with the abundance and multiplicity of the works to which it gave rise, wrested that study from the lethargy that threatened it. I am speaking of psycho-analysis.

Psycho-analysis or *psychanalysis* (the analysis of the mind or rather of the states of mind) is at once and by turns a method of therapeutics and a method of psychological investigation. Originated and given its first impetus by the Viennese doctor, Sigmund Freud, it has developed in a few years to an extraordinary extent and has led to the production of substantial works and several reviews which are entirely devoted to it.[13] Unfortunately, most of

[13] The following are the titles of these reviews:
Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen.
Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse.
Imago.
Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften.

these contributions to the study of psycho-analysis are in German.[14]

The founder of psycho-analysis, Sigmund Freud, is a neurologist, a pupil of Charcot of La Salpêtrière, as was M. Pierre Janet. Concerning this double descent from the illustrious French doctor, M. F. Morel has written, "It does not seem to us extreme to say that the birthplace of psycho-analysis was La Salpêtrière, where Freud was staying in 1885. Afterwards it took up its abode in Vienna." [15]

It was, then, while he was studying his specialty, hysteria, and subsequently other nervous disorders, that Freud gradually elaborated the new method to which he has given the name of psycho-analysis. The cases which he was led to treat and study at first hand struck him as having certain characteristics in common. He soon found himself convinced that the physiological and psychic disorders which he was examining in his patients had almost always a purely

Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse.
Schriften zur angewandten Seelenkunde.
The Psychoanalytic Review.
The International Journal of Psycho-analysis.

[14] Let me mention in French the volume by Drs. Régis and Hesnard, *La Psychoanalyse des névroses et des psychoses, ses applications médicales et extra-médicales.* Paris, Alcan, 1914 (furnished with a very full bibliography);—an article by M. Emile Lombard in the *Revue de théologie et de philosophie,* new series, II, pp. 14-47, entitles *Freud, la psychanalyse et la théorie psychogénétique des névroses;*—an *Essai sur l'introversion mystique* by M. Ferd. Morel, thesis for the doctorate in philosophy presented at the University of Geneva (Kündig, Geneva, 1918);—the lecture by Dr. Maeder; *Guérison et évolution dans la vie de l'âme. La psychanalyse, son importance dans la vie contemporaine,* Rascher, Zurich, 1918; the study by the same author of *Le pientre Hodler,* translated into French by M. Lenoir;—Jung, *Contribution à l'étude des types psychologiques,* Arch. de Psychol., XIII, 1913, p. 290;—Th. Flournoy, *Une mystique moderne,* Ibid. XV, 1915, pp. 1-224.—Henri Flournoy, *Symbolismes en psychopathologie* and *Quelques remarques sur le symbolisme dans l'hystérie,* Ibid. XVII, no. 67, 1919.

[15] Morel, Ferd., *Essai sur l'introversion mystique; étude psychologique de Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite et de quelques autres cas de mysticisme.* Geneva, Kündig, 1918, p. 7.

psychic origin. Thanks to his handling and his skill in analysis he was not slow in discovering that often, if not always, these nervous disorders were due to what he calls a *repression* (*Verdrängung*). Certain desires, certain instinctive impulsions had been, at some moment in his life, repressed by the patient. He had been ashamed of them, he had not wished to acknowledge them to himself or to confess them to others; he had shamefacedly suppressed the expression of them. Or rather (for this phenomenon usually takes place in early childhood), his parents, his teachers, the world, public opinion had opposed to the external manifestation of these natural instincts a barrier, a *censor*. We all know how frequent such cases are, how many instincts, impulses, natural inclinations are repressed in us from childhood by this censorship of public opinion, of education, which constantly checks the outbursts of human nature.

It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the natural instinct thus arrested by external barriers ceases for that reason to operate. On the contrary! Repressed as it may be, even banished from the open consciousness of the individual, it still does not cease to manifest itself, to make its influence felt. But since the force of its outward sally has been broken, as if by an iron wall, it falls back in the other direction; it rebounds from the consciousness into the obscure recesses of the *subconscious,* where it then produces a sort of tension. The pressure of the instinct does not cease; but not being able to express itself in the daylight because of the different censors which lie in wait for it, it pushes constantly against the door that is shut against it, strives to slip out through the cracks, and sometimes succeeds by means of a disguise. It then presents itself under the form of a *frequently repeated gesture,* a *ridiculous*

or meaningless habit, under the form of a *periodic crisis;* finally, it becomes a fomenter of disorders, a disease.[16]

If one psycho-analyses the patient, if one is able, that is, by means of certain methods such as confession, to rediscover the subconscious impulses of which he is himself often ignorant and which are at the bottom of his nervous disorder, he can be cured, gradually or quickly, as the case may be. In the beginning Freud made use of hynotism to discover the secret concealed in his patients. In the end he gave up this method, and it is now usually by conversation with them or by the *method of reactions* that he discovers the knot of ideas, impulses, instincts (or what he calls the complex) which is at the bottom of their illness.[17]

After the neuroses Freud took up the study of *dreams,* and here again he discovered the strange process of instinct which he had discovered in the neuroses. From his authori-

[16] Cf. Freud, *Ueber die Berechtigung von der Neurasthenie einen bestimmten Symptomenkomplex als Angstneurose abzutrennen.* Neurol. Zentralblatt, 1895, No. 2.

Id., *Obsessions et phobies, leur mécanisme psychique et leur étiologie.* Revue. neurol. III. 1895.

Id., *Formulierungen über die zwei Prinzipien des psychischen Geschehens.* Jahrbuch f. psychoanal. u. psychopathol. Forschungen III, 1, 1911.

Id., *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie.* Leipzig and Vienna, 1905.

Id., *Sammlung kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre aus den Jahren 1893-1896.* Leipzig and Vienna, Deuticke, 1906.

Id., *Zwangshandlungen und Religionsübung.* Zeitschrift für Religionspsychol. I, pp. 4-12.

[17] This method consists in pronouncing before the patient a certain number of words, chosen from all fields, to which he must reply immediately with the word which comes spontaneously to his mind, however incongruous or unsuitable this word may appear to him to be. Meanwhile the psycho-analyst has his chronometer in his hand and notes exactly the time that elapses between the word which he utters and that which he receives in reply. With a little practice and skill the psycho-analyst is very soon able to see which associations of ideas arouse in the patient painful or difficult reactions, and gradually, by means of more and more pointed questions, he reconstructs the circumstances in the life of the patient which have given rise to his neurosis. In this way the patient reveals to the psycho-analyst a part of his subconscious life of the value and meaning of which he has himself been ignorant.

tative study on this subject, *Die Traumdeutung,*[18] it becomes evident that the dream, every sort of dream, is nothing but a disguise of the desires and thoughts which have been driven back by the censor into the subconscious, and which, not being able to express themselves as long as the will of the individual is in the awakened state, come forth as soon as this will is asleep, and thus relieve the individual from the state of abnormal tension in which he finds himself.

The theory which Freud has drawn from his medical and psychological observations may then, in its large outlines, be summed up somewhat as follows:

1. At the base of human life there is a powerful force of energy, an *élan vital,* which he calls the *libido.* It must be confessed that Freud attributes to this *libido* a character that is strictly passional and even sexual, as its name indicates. He lays great emphasis on this side of things, while other psycho-analysts, particularly those of the school of Zurich,[19] tend to mitigate its earthiness and grossness. Taking both tendencies into consideration, we may say that at the base, at the source of our life there is a formidable instinctive urge, a copious stream of natural instincts and desires that are peculiarly related to the flesh.

2. This urge of the *libido* flings itself against what Freud calls the *censor,* that is, against the whole group of the moral and social rules which progress has heaped up about the modern human being. We are not able, and perhaps

[18] Leipzig and Vienna, Deuticke, 1911.

[19] Cf., Bleuler, E., *Die Psychanalyse Freuds: Verteidigung und Kritische Bemerkungen.* Leipzig, Deuticke, 1911.

Jung, C. G., *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido, Beiträge für Entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens.* Ibid., 1912.

Id., *Versuch einer Darstellung der psychoanalytischen Theorie, neun Vorlesungen gehalten in New York im Sept.,* 1912. Jahrb. f. psychoanal. und psychopath. Forsch., V, 1913.

Keller, Ad., art. *Pschoanalyse* in the encyclopædia *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart,* Bd. IV, Tübingen, 1913.

humanity itself, since it became humanity, has never been able to satisfy fully and without restraint the rush of our primitive natural instincts. Hence we have here a natural force at full strength which finds itself stopped by an impassable barrier. The moral conscience, society, education all intervene together to oppose it.

3. The instincts are therefore *repressed*. As they are forbidden to express themselves in the broad daylight of a consciousness that is fully aware of itself, they fling themselves against the walls, striving to get through. Here the danger begins. If the censorship is inexorably maintained —and it always is—the instincts resort to dissimulation and seek to make their way out by means of a disguise. They bring about a derangement of the personality, a malady which has all the characteristics of a mental disease; they ravage the human being, wasting him and injuring him. At least, unless the cure intervenes.

4. At this point appears a new aspect of Freud's theory, of which we have not yet spoken: the *sublimation of the instincts*.[20] When one has discovered the force that has caused these ravages in the individual, the repressed instinct that has been clamouring to express itself, the problem is to find an outlet for it. But, as there is no question of giving it outlet in its existing form, it has to be transformed; in place of the disorderly disguises which it has adopted it must be furnished with the possibility of an education, that is to say a transformation which elevates it. This is what Freud calls *sublimation*. The instinctive vital urge must, without ceasing to be a force of life, raise itself to a higher level, so that the purely natural instincts may become, as it were, supernatural. Here lies the true logical issue.

[20] On sublimation see: PFISTER, *Die psychanalytische Methode* (under *Sublimierung*, in the index); SILBERER, *Probleme der Mystik*. Vienna and Leipzig, Heller, 1914, pp. 104, 163-171, 192, etc.

Instead of being repressed, our deep natural instincts must be ennobled, lifted to the sublime, in order that the egoistical, brutal passion may be changed gradually into a love for others, and the bestial, repellent love transmuted into love for one's neighbour, into religious love.

Occasionally this sublimation takes place, in one way or another, of itself, without any violent shocks and in the mere play of life. It sometimes happens that in very pure natures the instincts, without losing their energy, naturally elevate themselves and are metamorphosed into moral powers. But as a rule it is only under the influence of powerful convictions and with the aid of unexpected forces that the sublimation occurs. Cases of sudden conversion are examples of crises, tumultuous by nature, in the midst of which this phenomenon takes place.

It hardly needs to be said that the brief sketch which we have just given of psycho-analysis does not exhaust the subject. In its roughness of outline it even distorts it in certain respects; it overlooks the finer distinctions; moreover, it leaves in the shadow a number of important points which we shall have occasion to mention in the course of this work.[21] Immediately following Freud, a host of psychologists have taken up his work and his principles and extended or modified on certain sides their application and consequences. From this have resulted a series of books, bearing on the most varied subjects, on myths, magic, religion, art, literature, dreams, *lapsus linguæ,* or *calami,* neuroses, forgetfulness, tics, etc., etc. These works constitute to-day a very important library which one ought to run through, pen in hand, and which bears witness to the treasures of observation which this new point of view has

[21] For example, the whole question of the family-complex and its rôle in the formation of myths (see pp. 109 et seqq.) and that of *introversion* (pp. 165 et seqq.).

brought to light in all branches of human knowledge.[22]

Perhaps we have said enough to indicate the movement, the scale of the psycho-analytic method, its manner of looking at life. It reveals to us in the deeply buried primitive instincts of the human animal a force which may devastate life unless, thanks to a magnificent sublimation, it serves to lead man to a path that is above nature. Now, could we not express in almost the same terms the essential conception that religion, and especially Christianity, holds in regard to human life? Instinct, the *libido,* the primitive, vital urge seems to exist solely to raise man up to the love of his neighbour in the largest and noblest sense, and if this sublimation fails to take place, disease, neuroses, mad-

[22] We shall mention here at least a few of these works which are among the most important or those of which we have made most use:

Freud, *Zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens (über Vergessen, Versprechen, Vergreifen, Aberglaube und Irrtum).* Berlin, Karger, 4 ed., 1912.

Id., *Totem und Tabu. Einige Uebereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker.* Leipzig and Vienna, Heller, 1913.

Id., *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten.* Leipzig and Vienna, Deuticke, 1912.

Rank, O., *Der Mythus von der Geburt des Helden. Versuch einer psychologischen Mythenbedeutung.* Schriften zur angewandten Seelenkunde, Heft 5, Vienna, 1912.

Id., *Das Inzest-Motiv in Dichtung und Sage.* Leipzig, Deuticke, 1912.

Id., *Psychoanalytische Beiträge zur Mythenforschung.* Leipzig. Internat. psychoan. Verlag, 1918.

Jung, C. G., *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido. Beiträge zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Denkens.* Leipzig, Deuticke, 1912.

Id., *Versuch einer Darstellung der psychoanalytischen Theorie.* Ibid., 1913.

Id., *Die Bedeutung des Vaters für das Schicksal des Einzelnen.* Jahrbuch f. psychoan. u. psychopathol. Forschungen, I, 1909.

Id., *Die Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse. Ein Ueberblick über die moderne Theorie und Methode der analytischen Psychologie.* Zurich, Rascher, 1917.

Pfister, O., *Die psychanalytische Methode.* Leipzig, Klinkhardt, 1913.

Id., *Ein neuer Zugang zum alten Evangelium. Mitteilungen über analytische Seelsorge an Nervösen, Gemütsleidenden und anderen seelisch Gebundenen.* Gütersloh, Bertelsmann, 1918.

Id., *Die Frömmigkeit des Grafen Ludwig von Zinzendorf.* Leipzig and Vienna, Deuticke, 1910.

Id., *Was beitet die Psychanalyse dem Erzieher?* Leipzig, Klinkhardt, 1917.

ness, in a word perdition, are at the door. It is a curious thing that we are led back by the study of psycho-analysis to the very terms of which Christianity avails itself in order to express the fundamental opposition in which human life struggles: *salvation* and *perdition.*

Since the individual human life presents itself as an urge of animal instincts, it flings itself, whether it desires to do so or not, against the censorship that has resulted from the progress of this same human life in its social form, and which sets up against it a solid wall. This is the old antithesis, the contradiction which has been recognised always and everywhere, which in antiquity was described as *fatum,* destiny, and which Christians call sin. It is the same psychic movement always, regarded merely from different angles. On one side, the *élan vital,* liberty without restraint,

Id., *Wahrheit und Schönheit in der Psychanalyse.* Zurich, Rascher, 1918.

Silberer, H., *Probleme der Mystik und Ihrer Symbolik.* Vienna and Leipzig, Heller, 1914.

Id., *Durch Tod zum Leben. Eine kurze Untersuchung über die entwicklungsgeschichtliche Bedeutung des Symbols der Wiedergeburt in seinen Urformen, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der modernen Theosophie.* Leipzig, Heims, 1915.

Bleuler, E., *Die Psychanalyse Freuds. Verteidigung und kritische Bemerkungen.* Leipzig, Deuticke, 1911.

Id., *Das autistische Denken.* Jahrbuch f. psychoan. u. psychopath. Forschungen, IV.

Ricklin, Fr., *Wunscherfüllung und Symbolik im Märchen, eine Studie.* Schriften z. angewandten Seelenkunde, Heft II.

Jones, Ernest, *Das Problem des Hamlet und der Oedipus-Komplex.* Ibid., Heft X.

Abraham, *Traum und Mythus. Eine Studie zur Völkerpsychologie.* Ibid., Heft IV.

Adler, Alf., *Ueber den nervösen Charakter, Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Individualpsychologie und Psychotherapie.* Weisbaden, Bergmann, 1912.

Reik, Th., *Probleme der Religionspsychologie.* Leipzig, Int. psychoan. Verlag, 1918.

Flügel, J. C., *The Psycho-analytic Study of the Family.* The Internat. Psycho-anal. Press. London, Vienna, New York, 1921, pp. 259.

Baudouin, *Etudes de Psychanalyse.* Neuchâtel and Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1922, pp. 288.

For further details, consult G. Berguer, *Psychologie religieuse, revue et bibliographie générales,* Geneva, Kündig, 1914, in which works issued prior to 1914 are listed.

the right to liberty and to a complete development; on the other, arrest, inhibition, incomprehensible darkness, a misery that has no right to exist but which does exist nevertheless, and powerfully.

If the individual tries to cross the wall, to give free rein to his nature as it is, he falls back into animality and cuts himself off from the communion of his fellows. If he is content to submit passively to the arrest, his suppressed instincts torment him and throw him into confusion. Only one issue remains: that of the sublimation of the instincts. And this issue is singularly analogous to that proposed by Christianity. For is it anything else than a new birth? Does it aspire to be anything else than a *regeneration,* that is to say a new fecundation of the being carried out on the plane of a higher life?

It is true that the psycho-analysts do not, as a general thing, insist upon the analogies which we are raising here. Their interest is different and their thoughts are oriented in another direction. But this encounter between the modern analysis of the deepest life of the soul and the affirmations of Christian piety touching the only possible method of salvation is calculated, we must confess, to stir any one who has found in Christ the secret of life.

For the rest, the psycho-analytic method does not interest us merely because it conceives of the progress of life in a manner analogous to that of Christianity. It has also opened to us unlimited perspectives into the rôle played by the unconscious in the life of the feelings, into the primordial importance of the affective subconscious life and its action upon all the rest of existence. It teaches us to relate the humblest beginnings to the loftiest results and to find a continuity where formerly one could only see oppositions. The associations of primitive ideas and the play of the feelings in the subconscious life of the child,

the *complexes* which it has discovered and established as existing at the outset of every mental life will aid us particularly in solving problems of religious psychology which, without it, would have remained enveloped in the deepest obscurity. By the light of psycho-analysis the psychic roots of the religious life are revealed, and the numerous points of comparison help us, without destroying its secret, to a better comprehension of this mystery of the supernature of the spirit which has engrafted itself upon the nature of the flesh. The problem of Christ thus comes into close relationship with the problem of human life, and the magnificent unity of the two stands out in dazzling relief. We shall seek to render this perceptible at every possible opportunity.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANITY AND THE MYSTERY-RELIGIONS

THE introduction to the life of Jesus brings up a number of problems. Chief among these are the problems raised by an examination of the documents in which that life has been recorded and the condition in which they have come down to us. In order to write a life of Jesus we must then, first of all, take some note of biblical criticism and the criticism of the text of the gospels and the epistles.

We have not done everything when we have established the validity of the documents that have come down to us from the first Christian generations. As we take up this work itself we perceive at once that many other questions are bound up with it and related to it in different degrees. We observe, for example, that the men who laboured to assemble the evidence on the life of Jesus, as well as those for whom the redaction was done, lived in a certain environment and at a certain period which present very special and very clearly marked characteristics. The Greco-Roman environment of the first years of our era was the expression and the result of a highly developed culture. Now minds living at such a moment and in the midst of such a culture were not a *tabula rasa.* They could not, without preconceived ideas, accept the new religion, the Christianity that presented itself to them; nor could they, in receiving it, make a clean sweep of everything which the floating ideas, the education, the manner of thinking of their century had already deposited in them.

For this reason, no matter how authentic and sincere may be the documents that purport to describe for us the life of Jesus, they nevertheless reflect this great figure from a certain angle and consider it under a light which is that of their own age. The forms of speech, for example, of which Saint Paul makes use, are not always new forms. They had often been used in other religions than Christianity, and they had acquired from them a certain meaning, had become charged with a signification of which we cannot easily perceive the bearing without studying these religions themselves.

Every one, in order to express his own most original convictions, makes use of concepts in which the state of mind of his epoch and his environment is reflected. This is true at all times, but the Greco-Roman environment of this epoch presented a character that has perhaps never been reproduced, particularly in the domain of religion. The extent of the empire, its successive conquests, had brought it into contact with very diverse civilisations. Owing to the constant changes of position of the armies, to the trade in slaves, who were carried from one country to another, a prodigiously rapid circulation of ideas had been established between the different parts of this multiple and diverse world. The Roman tolerance had favoured this mixture, this vast syncretism of religious ideas. All the races rubbed elbows; all the cults were brought into communication and borrowed from one another, sometimes melting into one another, sometimes fusing their rites and their practices. Amid so many divergences in details people became aware, little by little, of the points they had in common. Certain lines appeared to be better marked than others in the general design of religious thought. The human soul began to feel, if not always to understand or to grasp, its identity.

This seething mass of thought, in which so many different currents came to mingle in a certain unity, has received a name. It is *Hellenistic thought*, and this is the *Hellenistic period*. In it there are so many things, so many elements, so many questions, such a throbbing life and such an extraordinary admixture of good and evil, power and weakness, imposture and sincerity, that the authors who have dealt with it have rarely succeeded in determining the precise limits of what is meant by the Hellenistic world and Hellenistic thought. The boundaries of this world and this thought remain cloudy and uncertain as regards both time and space.[1] But we can at least affirm that it was in this world and at the end of this epoch that Christianity made its appearance in the empire and commenced its victorious march before which all the other religions were soon to grow pale and fade away.

It will therefore be eminently useful to any one who wishes to grasp Christianity through the utterances and the mentality of disciples who lived in this period to study the religious thought of the day and to see by means of what concepts and under what symbols religious-minded people of that time grasped religious matters, involuntarily, almost without knowing it, unconsciously.

Let me make myself clear. I do not mean to imply that a Saint Paul or a Saint John altered the figure of Christ under the influence of ideas which came from without. What I mean is merely that they saw with their own eyes, or rather with their souls, and that their souls lived in the Greco-Roman world of the first centuries and under the influence of its culture. There are, for example, terms employed by Saint Paul which we should be mistaken in

[1] By the "Hellenistic period" we generally understand that which extends from 300 to 100 B.C., from Alexander the Great to the time of the expansion of the empire towards the West. But its consequences were prolonged far beyond this.

regarding as invented by him or selected by chance from the miscellaneous baggage of the vulgar tongue. These expressions only assume their real value and their true sense when we know what they signify in the contemporary religions. And this must be affirmed not of expressions only but also of certain notions and certain groups of notions, certain associations of ideas which at that time were current in the religious world and were familiar to him, such as death and regeneration or re-birth, the idea of salvation or σωτηρία, etc. It remains entirely possible that these notions and these expressions may have been transformed in passing out of paganism into Christianity, that the Christians themselves may have given to them in using them a more profound and more spiritual meaning. But it is no less true that they were current and that their use gave rise to rapprochements that we should do wrong not to take into account.

The study of the ideas, the feelings, the impulsions which were current in the pagan world at the moment when the good news, the gospel of Christ appeared, is thus one of the necessary elements of an introduction to the life of Jesus. We must know what were the preponderant religious needs, how people satisfied them, or how they attempted to satisfy them; consequently, we must study the principal characteristics of this vast syncretism of ideas, rites, cults, and initiations which constitute the Hellenistic world. From the religious point of view, the broad general lines of this subject may be indicated as follows:

1. First, a sort of awakening of religious thought under the influence of Stoicism, but a Stoicism of a quite special kind of which Posidonius remains the typical representative, a Stoicism mixed with Chaldeo-Babylonian mysticism and from which Philo perhaps derived most of his mystical ideas. We find echoes of this religious and mystical philos-

ophy in the writings of Cicero and Seneca, and they are expressed in their popular form in the pseudo-Aristotelian treatise *περὶ κόσμου*, which dates from the second century A.D.

2. Side by side with this movement of philosophic thought we must mention *Orphism,* the obscure origins of which go back perhaps to the seventh or the sixth century B.C., and which strongly influenced Pythagoras. This also may have contained Oriental elements (probably Babylonian); it had a certain influence on the cult of Dionysus and it is the foundation of the vast Gnostic movement. It also influenced the religious ideas and especially the eschatology of Plato, Empedocles, and Pindar. The Stoics regarded the Orphic books as a revelation; and for the Neo-Platonists they were, or they became, the essential books from which the latter derived their principal doctrines.

3. *Gnosticism,* that strange and powerful current of mystical thought which later became a danger to the orthodox faith, or was at least regarded by the faith as dangerous; against which we see Saint Paul already taking his stand, while other doctors of the later Church are to borrow silently but profitably from it.

4. Finally, alongside of these great waves of religious thought which we can mention here only too briefly, we must include as of the first importance the *Mystery-Religions* which arrived from the Orient or from Greece at about the same epoch as Christianity, though some arrived before it, and which mysteriously stirred many a soul that was in quest of salvation or afflicted by life.

It would be pertinent to linger particularly over the description of these religions, inasmuch as they sum up and condense in their ceremonies, their rites, their symbols, and their myths the essential tendencies of the soul of that period. They reveal to us its more or less conscious needs,

its secret aspirations, its latent desires; they mark an extremely interesting stage of the human conscience.

Unfortunately, such a study would occupy a disproportionate place in a simple introduction. Since, on the other hand, their elements can be found in special works, we shall concern ourselves here simply with the *psychological* questions which the Mystery-Religions present.

We shall ask first, what is the essential characteristic of the psychological movement, the psychic process that is displayed in this rich efflorescence of rites and ceremonies, this creation or transfigured resurrection of gods and goddesses which bears the name of the Mystery-Cults. From the psychological point of view, how can we explain such a birth or such a rebirth of old religions under an entirely new form, together with the enthusiasm of the peoples of the Roman Empire for these new rites: lustrations, baptisms of blood, hierogamies, and mysterious initiations? Whence has it all come and whither is it all going? Are we to see in this exuberant symbolism nothing but the intoxication of consciences in delirium? Does some profound revelation perhaps lurk behind the often sensual frenzy of the mystical ecstasy that excites the initiates? Towards what does it carry us, what heights, what abysses? Are the Fathers of the Church right in severely condemning these orgiastic cults? Have they really nothing to say to us? And would it be too daring to suggest that there is something in common between the souls who flung themselves into these cults and those who, at about the same period, and driven, as it appears, by similar needs, hail in Christ the Saviour of the world and the Master to whom they have aspired unawares?

How many questions! It would be impossible for us to answer them all in succession. But perhaps we shall answer them all at once if we simply define the *psychic nature*

of the mental process that created and developed these Mystery-Religions.

§ 1. PARALLELISM OF THE PSYCHIC PRODROMES OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE MYSTERY-RELIGIONS

One of the best means of investigation open to the psychologist who finds himself faced with the task of describing a spiritual movement is comparison. He runs through the pages of history in order to discover in other epochs and in other circumstances those psychic adventures of which at least some of the conditions suggest those of the movement he is particularly engaged in studying. And here it is not so much the similarity in external conditions or visible characteristics that matters, but rather the analogy of the inner processes and the mental currents that sweep minds along. Beneath the variety and the frequently glaring contrast in respect of characteristics, ends consciously followed and consequences, he must seek to discern the sub-conscious design, the underlying curve of the tendencies and impulsions, the slow germination of deep instincts that follow similar paths and point towards an identical goal which only reveals itself later.

Now there is a movement better known than the Mystery-Religions that approaches, in its psychological finality, the great effervescence of emotion, sentiments, and desires that courses through these religions; and this is the Israelitish prophecy of the seventh and eighth centuries B.C.

My readers will no doubt protest; but patience! Beneath the apparent contrasts which, at first, make us smile at the idea of any such resemblance, let us try to penetrate to the depths of souls who, everywhere and at all times in history, have been tormented by the same desires and driven by identical instincts. There is certainly a resem-

blance between these two movements and I shall endeavour to make it apparent.

First, there is an analogy between the periods in which they both came to birth; then there is an analogy between the aspirations and the religious desires to which, in the one case as in the other, historical and national circumstances gave rise. Both were periods of national decadence. At the time when the great prophets were living among the Hebrews, the apogee of the national life had been long since attained. The Asiatic menace was becoming more pressing year by year; the patriotic spirit was diminishing; luxury and display but thinly veiled the decay of morals and the general laxness of the people. We can understand how great patriots like the prophets, rising up here and there, should have been almost forced to return into themselves to rediscover, in the retreats of the inner life and personal piety, those energies which they sought in vain about them. The national decadence thus gave rise, among the best men, to a *violent movement of introversion.*[2] But the energies of the *libido,* discovered anew in their own consciousness by the prophets and liberated, prepared the way for a new ideal of life. And it was then that the figure of the Messiah

[2] Consult, in connection with *introversion* and the sense of this word in psycho-analytical language, the works of the psycho-analysts. They have attributed great importance to this return of the soul upon itself, this backward plunge which may lead to a fatal blight of the being, or which may, on the contrary, serve as a sort of bath of youth in which the inner man renews his strength by returning to its source. We shall take up this point again in connection with the Temptation. Meanwhile, see:

Morel, Ferd., *Essai sur l'introversion mystique.* Geneva, Kündig, 1918.

Bleuler, E., *Das autistische Denken,* Jb. f. psychoan. Forsch., IV.

Jung., C. G., *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido.* II. Teil, ch. V-VI.

Silberer, H., *Probleme der Mystik und ihrer Symbolik.* III. Teil, ch. I.

Id., *Durch Tod zum Leben.* Leipzig, Heims, 1915.

Ferenczi, S., *Introjektion und Uebertragung.* Leipzig, Deuticke, 1910.

gradually began to take form on the horizon, the divine manifestation which they sought, hoped for, and desired and which would respond to the ardent aspirations of the race.

The period in which the Mystery-Religions flourished was, I have said, somewhat analogous to that which we have just described. Rome too had already reached the height of her power; she was beginning to decline. The reigns under which the Mystery-Cults flourished with the greatest intensity were those of the decadence. The society of which people had dreamed had not fulfilled its promise; a great disgust, a disillusioned scepticism laid hold of men's souls. Not from the empire would salvation come, however people might still worship the emperor. Thus at this time too a powerful movement of *introversion* took place. The lesser folk particularly, the humble, the slaves sought within themselves and in religion for what they could not find without, in society. They made their appeal to everything, to all the gods, to all the religions; but their souls were constrained to turn back upon themselves; and there alone they came gradually to find the ideal for which they had sought in vain in the established cults. In the name of the imperative inner needs which they understood but vaguely, but which imposed their forms upon the popular devotion, the cults of the foreign gods were transformed and the gods themselves altered their faces. Little by little there came into existence a type of the God of Mysteries, a sort of Saviour-God, whose features still retained some of the inferior characteristics while presenting others that denoted the nobility of its psychic origins.

Thus, between the Israelitish prophecy and the spiritual movement that gave rise to the Mystery-Cults there exists an analogy not only in respect of the historical epoch but also in respect of the *creation of the ideal.* We might say

that, in a certain sense, the Messiah, as his figure appears in the Jewish writings, is the *god of the Israelitish Mystery* and that the gods of the Hellenico-Roman mysteries are the *messianic figures* created by the Greco-Roman soul.

In this sense the two movements are psychically analogous. It remains to determine their character, or rather to determine precisely in what the analogy between them consists. It is not a historical analogy. Historically, nothing could be more different than Hebrew prophecy and the Greco-Roman mysteries. But the psychic processes of these two religious movements present a common character which, as a matter of fact, may be found elsewhere and may be discerned in other periods of the general evolution of religion. They move in the same direction, guided by the same forces; they both seek a fulfilment and seek it along the same lines, following the same tendencies. The same anxiety torments them, driving them to place in the future the reply to the unsatisfied needs from which their votaries suffer. Both possess what might be called the *prophetic gift* or *faculty,* which is nothing else than the propensity of the soul to evoke in advance the religious object to which it has a right because it cannot do without it, to outline its features and construct the symbolic figure from them while awaiting its actual realisation.

We might say, in fact, that as the human soul gains a better knowledge of itself, it is impelled by a secret and imperious instinct to sketch with more and more vivid strokes the ideal lines of the divine figure which it burns to know and possess. In this immense task all the forces of the being and all its faculties are evidently united, imagination as well as memory, feeling as well as reason. But above all, it is the *subconscious energies* which are engaged in this effort. The Messiah who is born beneath the pen of the prophets, the gods that spring from the imagination

of the initiates and the priests are the work not of one man but of whole generations who, by their sufferings and their tormenting aspirations, effectually contribute to bring them forth. Of the characteristics that compose them, many will be dropped along the way; others will declare themselves with greater force and will remain. In the completed figure there will be both contributions from the past and fresh elements. But, on the one side as on the other, it is a new divine figure that emerges gradually from the old ones, and one would say that this figure had been kneaded from the flesh, the blood, and the tears of labouring humanity; it is, from the point of view of piety, as if the Father had created the Son out of Man, out of the human consciousness.

But I do not wish to insist unreasonably upon this parallel between the movement that produced the Mystery-Religions and Hebrew prophecy. It would be rather pedantic to pursue it too far, the more so as my intention in referring to it has been merely to point out a characteristic of psychic creation which is especially perceptible here but which is to be found elsewhere, the tendency, constantly manifested by the religious soul, to *fashion divine figures and create a type of salvation* that is better adapted than the old gods and the beliefs of the past to the deepest needs of the personality and the race. This may be the very basis of the whole evolution of religion, and I am not far from thinking that it may be the secret of it.

Now, if we take the Mysteries, on the one hand, and Jesus Christ on the other as the two terminating points in analogous mental processes, the one crowning the religious development of Hellenistic syncretism, the other crowning the long evolution of the Jewish religion, we are in a position, by looking backward, to survey the psychic steps that have led to this double efflorescence. We can then, while

reserving our appreciation of their respective meanings and values, point out their striking similarity.

In both cases we discover a search in which are united all the life-forces of humanity, or rather of a portion of humanity, a human group. In both cases we see man in search of the divinity and the divine life. Here we have the distinctly religious search, the religious problem taking shape and demanding a solution. We might investigate this religious search in other periods and among other peoples, and we should no doubt find that it was identical everywhere. But although we have no wish to isolate them from the great universal current of the evolution of religion, it is to the Mystery-Religions that we must limit our study here. We shall ask ourselves how in them the prophetic faculty has developed psychically, what are the means it has employed and the processes which it has called into action to evoke, before the consciousness, the religious object which it desired.

§ 2. THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MYSTERIES: ITS RELATIONS WITH THAT OF CHRISTIANITY

Those who are concerned with religious convictions as well as with religious phenomena, find that religion appears everywhere to include two movements, that of man striving to raise himself towards God, that of the divinity reaching down to man. These two movements, meeting and uniting with one another, constitute the religious life, living and lived.

In psychology, however, we are not concerned with the second of these movements (God reaching down towards man) since psychology expressly excludes the transcendental. We shall therefore examine only the former, which is the effort of the religious quest of man. But how does

this effort manifest itself? It manifests itself through a series of modifications in the *representations that man makes of his gods or his god,* and by an almost parallel series of modifications in the *idea which he has formed of salvation,* of the life with God, of the communion with the divinity, of the manner of becoming divine or participating in the divine life.

The *conception of the divinity,* the *conception of salvation* or of the divine life, these things take shape in a *symbolism* which is the only means of representing the ineffable. As a matter of fact, nothing that relates to God, nothing that tries to express God can translate itself to the human understanding and manifest itself externally save under symbolic forms. Man has no other means of expressing the inexpressible, of rendering in material terms that which is spiritual in essence. As soon as he seeks to explain his god to himself and to define him in some fashion or other, he is obliged, by the very nature of his intelligence to have recourse to symbols. Thus we have a double symbolism, one dealing with the *persons of the gods themselves,* manifesting itself through the attributes which man, the sculptor, accords to them, the figure he gives them, the form symbolising here the nature which the human mind attributes to its divinities and the intentions it ascribes to them. The other is the symbolism the important rôle of which is found in the rites, the ceremonies, the festivals, the sacraments, the liturgies, and, in general, in all the spectacles of the sacred ceremony: this is *the symbolism of the means of appropriating the divine life or of participating in it,* the symbolism of the cult and the Mysteries.

Now, whence do the elements of this double symbolism come? Its psychological elements, I mean. What is it that has impelled the human soul to represent its gods in one manner rather than in another? In choosing for them

attributes from nature, what has led it to give these attributes a precise meaning in relation to human life? To all these questions there is only one possible answer. Man can no more pass outside his own consciousness than he can escape from his own shadow. It is in him that we must seek for the origin of the double symbolism which the evolution of the religions manifests. In struggling to represent the god which he felt labouring within him, he could start only from the depths of the experience which he had within him. Now, the psycho-analysts tell us that what constitutes the primitive psychic constellation in man, the oldest basis, the most elementary associations of the soul, is what they call the family-complex, that is to say, those associations of ideas, heavily charged with affectivity, which, with the young child, during the first years of its life, are grouped or, so to speak, coagulated about the images of the father and the mother and all that concerns them.[3] When he turns back into himself, in the phenomenon of introversion, it is to this that the man returns. He rediscovers the family-complex, subconsciously present in the depths of himself, lays hold upon it, and translates it externally in his works of art, his philosophy, his literature, and his religion. It is therefore most probable that from this family-complex there also sprang the symbolism through which man has sought to represent his gods.

[3] The question of the family-complex will be taken up in more detail in connection with the myths, pp. 109 et seqq. Cf., in regard to this question:

Rank, *Das-Inzest-Motiv.* (The consequences of the family-complex in literature.)

Jones, *The Problem of Hamlet.* Amer. Journal of Psychology, 1910, XXI, 72 (id.).

Freud, *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci.* Schriften z. angew. Seelenkunde. Heft VII. (Consequences of the family-complex in art.)

Id., *Totem und Tabu.* (Consequences in religion and civilization.)

Pfister, *Die Frömmigkeit des Grafen L. von Zinzendorf.* (Consequences in religion.)

Id., *Ein neuer Zugang zum alten Evangelium.* (id.)

It follows that even if the primitive religions which gave birth to the Mysteries may have been agricultural cults, born from magical ideas related to the productivity of the soil and to economic preoccupations (though this is not absolutely proved) the *agrarian symbolism* of these cults rapidly became charged with a meaning that is more directly human. The concepts of production, of fecundity, were closely bound up, in the human mind, with the family-complex; and the violent urge of the *libido* in the direction of religion promptly seized upon this primitive symbolism, transforming it in its own image. The gods and the goddesses became *fathers* and *mothers,* bound up with the family-complex and evolving with it.

There is much to be said on this subject, and no doubt the observations of psychology, further excavations, and the study of antiquity will teach us a great deal more about the evolution of this symbolism. Here let us merely point out one of its most marked features. The symbols which manifest themselves in the Mystery-Religions are, at the same time and by turns, *material* and *mystical.*[4] What do we mean by this? Conceived at first materially, interpreted literally, as if they expressed the earthy idea that man held in the beginning about his gods, their nature, and their relations, the symbols take on, little by little, according to the nature of the souls and the quality of the souls that contemplate them, an import that is in a way prophetic. The seeking soul sees in them a profounder meaning, more moral, more elevated, more worthy of the spirit. This life of the symbols must have been infinitely complex and varied, reflecting the oscillations of the inner life of the faithful. And that is why it is perfectly ridiculous and

[4] For exact information on this subject, see Silberer, *Ueber die Symbolbildung,* Jahrbuch f. psychoanal. Forsch., III, pp. 661-723, and below, pp. 28 et seqq., 70, etc.

vain to try to assign to each a meaning that is exact and *ne varietur*. It was by a very slow progress, interrupted by retreats and detours, that the gods of the Mysteries became the Saviour-gods. The representations that men made of them and the idea which they had of a communion with them, expressed under the form of symbols, probably never had an identical significance for all their votaries. Born, perhaps, under the influence of agricultural labours, these symbols very quickly took on a *sexual significance,* reflecting the formidable urge of the instinctive *libido* which animates all men. But the life of the spirit, rising from this natural basis, slowly transformed their meaning, gradually purifying them until it finally contemplated in them the image of filial and paternal relations of a spiritual nature, unions of the spirit which led no longer to a carnal birth but to a new birth.

Let us now attempt to render this psychic evolution perceptible by taking up two features of which we have already spoken: the different conceptions which men formed of the *nature of the gods* and those which they held of a *union with them,* showing how the souls of the faithful were able to rise above these symbols, to rise from a primitive and grossly materialistic sexuality to the purest spirituality. In doing so we shall be tracing at the same time the prophetic line which develops in the creation and evolution of the cult of the Mysteries.

Let us try not to forget, in tracing this line, that a contrary tendency constantly restrains the human soul in its ascent and seems to take pleasure in arresting it in its rise towards sublimation. This is so true that, even in Christianity, after the appearance and the life of the Saviour, the materialism of the conceptions once more takes the upper hand and, seizing upon the most purely spiritual symbols, charges them with a meaning that is grossly and unquali-

fiedly earthy. It seems truly as if the soul, rising in its course of sublimation, had continually to overcome a resistance that tends to keep it in the sexual dream.

In the Mystery-Cults, the divine figure, which responds to the deepest desires of the soul, is thus outlined on the primitive basis of the family-complex. At times this evolution has probably begun with more or less traditional elements which it has transformed in the image of the human psychology, using the themes of the ancient religions as a pedestal upon which to erect the incomparable statue which the great sculptor, Human Desire, has been roughhewing with little strokes, now slowly, now with a magnificent impatience. In the following survey I shall pay no attention to chronology; it would take too long to establish this, and it might make little difference in any case, since the inner labour of which I speak varies in different cities, countries, races, and peoples and does not follow everywhere the same order. On the other hand, I shall seek to trace here and there a few parallels with Christianity, showing how, in the development of the Christian Church, we find at work the same forces that have united in the formation of other cults, producing analogous effects there also and leading to conceptions of the divinity in which we rediscover at times gross and primitive needs and desires —like the erratic blocks of geology—that have not yet attained to sublimation.[5]

1. First we see, in the Mystery-Cults, the union with the god conceived in an entirely *material* fashion, as a physical, a sort of corporeal union. The god is supposed to enter into the believer, to penetrate him, in an altogether *material,* a quite unspiritual, manner. Undoubtedly it is in this fashion that we must conceive of the *sacred feasts* which

[5] Most of the features of this outline are borrowed from DIETERICH, *Eine Mithrasliturgie,* 1903.

took place in the cult of Mithra and in that of Attis.[6] These may be compared with the *totemic* repasts of the primitive peoples, in which, by eating the sacred animal, the faithful appropriate its strength. Unfortunately, we do not know exactly what relation existed between the sacrifice of the bull, in the cult of Mithra, and the sacred feast, nor even whether there was any such relation. But it seems fairly probable that, in the beginning at least, the mystics of these two cults were supposed to acquire the god's strength in some magical way by the manducation of the

[6] Cf. CUMONT, *Les religions orientales dans l'empire romain,* pp. 103 et seqq., and HEPDING, *Attis,* p. 186.

Besides the banquet of the *thiasus* or *sodalicium* of the votaries of the cult of the Great Mother, there was probably another sacred meal which took place in the sanctuary itself at the moment of the initiation. After having been purified by several successive baptisms, the initiate sat down to the divine meal. Cybele and Attis admitted him to their holy table; he became a member of the divine family. The wafer that was offered him had the form of the tympanum which the goddess held in her hand; the chalice was the cymbal, the attribute of Attis, from which he drank the beverage of immortality. A cake of pure wheat together with wine seems to have been the composition of this meal. Judging from the funerary inscription of a priest named Aberkios, Hepding offers the hypothesis that at this ceremony they ate fish, bread, and a mixture of wine and water. It is possible that in the beginning, in Phrygia, they may have consumed a divine animal in order to identify themselves with the god and participate in his substance, as the totemists do. But at Rome this gross significance of the communion gradually vanishes. The viands become at length a spiritual aliment which shall sustain the initiate amidst the trials of life. This sacred feast has left us one of the few liturgical formulas of antiquity that have been preserved: "I have eaten from the tabor, I have drunk from the cymbal, I have become a mystic of Attis." (Cf. Firmicus and Clement of Alexandria.)

A similar repast is also celebrated in the cult of Mithra. We can distinguish the outline of this from the representations on the bas-reliefs in which the loaves of bread and the chalice are clearly visible. With the love-feast of Mithra was mingled a reminiscence of a *last feast* of which the god was supposed to have partaken, in company with the sun, at the end of his career.

It is difficult to say what was the original source either of the Christian Communion or of the pagan communion. It is possible and even more than probable that Jesus, when he instituted the Lord's Supper, had no intention of making a sacrament of it. If that is the case, there is some foundation for the hypothesis that the Christians materialised this personal memorial later on and raised it to the rank of a sacred ceremony as a result of contact with the pagan sacraments.

sacred food. In the same fashion the absorption of the sacred drink of Eleusis, the χυχέων (cyceon) was regarded as certain to communicate the divine life in a more or less material way.

This tendency to consider the union with the divinity as something physical and therefore mechanical is found everywhere. It makes its appearance also in primitive Christianity, where the Lord's Supper was speedily turned into a feast similar to those of the pagan cults in which the god was, so to speak, ingurgitated by the believer. This manner of regarding it is still triumphant in the conception of the Eucharist that exists at the heart of Catholicism.[7]

What is the reason of this tendency, and how can we explain it psychologically? At bottom it is nothing but the line of least resistance; it gratifies the natural laziness of man; it substitutes dreams for action. Instead of striving to possess one's god, one receives him by a purely material process. How much simpler and easier it is! We are dealing here with the same tendency which the psychoanalysts have already pointed out in introversion: the propensity to adopt the way of dreams rather than to seize upon reality and struggle with it.[8]

[7] Cf. ANRICH, *Das antike Mysterienwesen,* pp. 155-164, 200-205, 218.
BONWETSCH, *Wesen, Entstehung und Fortgang der Arcandisziplin.* Zeitschrift f. hist. Theologie, XLIII, 1873, pp. 295 et seqq.
LOOFS, Art. *Abendmahl* in Herzog Realencycl. für prot. Theol. I, 1896.
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GOBLET D'ALVIELLA, *Eleusinia,* p. 146.
SOLTAU, *Das Fortleben des Heidentums in der altchristlichen Kirche.* Berlin, Reimer, 1906.
BARBIER, H., *Essai historique sur la signification primitive de la Sainte Cène.* St. Blaise, Foyer solid., 1911, pp. 171.
GOGUEL, H. M., *L'Eucharistie, des Origines à Justin Martyr,* 1910.

[8] See (p. 168 et seqq.) the three possible issues of introversion. It may constitute a loss of what M. P. Janet calls the *function of the real* for the benefit of the dream. It may, on the contrary, be only a moment in the process through which the individual escapes from the constraints of reality to rediscover in himself those latent forces which will enable him to confront again, and this time victoriously, the difficulties of life. Cf. also FLOURNOY, TH., *Une mystique moderne.* Arch. de Psychol. XV, 1915, pp. 206-207.

Scarcely had Christ quitted this earth when, in the very field of the Christian religion itself, we see this propensity to materialise the relation to God, to consider it as in some way a physical union, reappearing. I am thinking not only of the distortion of the Lord's Supper but also of the manner of representing the gift of the Holy Spirit as we see it as early as in the Acts of the Apostles and even in one or two expressions in the gospels. To believe in the presence of the Holy Ghost in themselves, the apostles were obliged to see tongues of flame descending upon their heads and to hear the sound of a mighty wind. We are told in the gospels (John xx, 22) that Jesus breathed on his disciples, saying to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," as if it was his breath which, penetrating them in a material way, brought them into a spiritual communion with God. What we have here is obviously a very ingenuous idea of the penetration of man by the Holy Ghost; it is as if a divine substance entered into his body and took possession of it. The gift of tongues, the glossolaly, was also regarded by the first generation of believers as the result, the material sign of this presence of the Spirit in man. Saint Paul himself seems to have shared this opinion, even while he censured the abuse of a mode of expression that was certainly extravagant and anything but edifying.[9]

2. A second manner of representing the union with the divinity which we frequently encounter in the Mystery-Cults consists in making it a *sexual union*. Here again appears the idea of a physical, material penetration of the believer on the part of the god. In this notion we also see very clearly the influence of the family-complex. The symbol of the sexual union with the deity has, so to speak, two aspects: a material aspect which springs from the infantile

[9] Cf. I Cor. xiv and particularly v. 19.

roots and the family-complex, but also a teleological or anagogical aspect that looks toward a mystical or mystico-spiritualistic union along the paths of sublimation. By employing this symbol the faithful will pass from the carnal love to the spiritual or divine love, and in the measure in which they succeed in sublimating their desires, the current of life which bears them along in their quest for the divinity will take on an entirely different tonality in which the passional will become the religious, in the proper sense of the word.

Before entering upon these considerations, however, let us recall a few facts which illustrate this conception of the union with the god. First of all, there is the part played by the *serpent* in the initiation ceremonies, of which Dieterich reminds us.[10] The latter cites Clement of Alexandria who, in connection with the Mysteries of Sabazios, speaks of the serpent that was drawn from the bosom of the mystic at a certain moment of the initiation and which was called ὁ διὰ κόλπου θεός, the god who passes through the bosom. This rite, according to Dieterich, has nothing to do with the ancient rites of adoption in which the adopted child was drawn from the bosom of the adoptive mother, as if to symbolise birth. Here it is the god who is drawn from the breast of the believer: and this can signify nothing but a sexual union between the god and the initiate, for, as with the Gnostics, the god always represents the male element in relation to the believer, to the soul of the believer, which is the feminine element.

To pass to another order of ideas, we may also mention the frequent entrance of the initiate into the παστός. The παστός seems to designate, in the ecclesiastical language of the Greeks, the nuptial chamber. Accordingly, when the

[10] Cf. DIETERICH, *Eine Mithrasliturgie.*

initate of Cybele enters into the παστος of the goddess, it signifies a sexual union with the divinity.[11]

Shall we speak of the *baskets* which were carried in almost all the sacred processions of the Mysteries and the contents of which remained concealed? These baskets were, in all probability, supposed to contain the phallus of the god, and here again the idea of a sexual union was dissembled.

We must also mention at this point the enormous rôle played by the *impeded sexual union* in the cult of Attis and Cybele. The whole myth turns on this; and is not the castration of Attis, as well as that of the Galli, his priests, a symbolic allusion to the repressions that prevent this union?

Let us cite also the *hierogamies,* or sacred marriages, that of the initiate with Cybele, the Great Mother, that of Dionysus, in the Eleusinian Mysteries, with the wife of the archon-king, after the reconstitution of his torn body. Finally, the whole myth of Isis and Osiris gathers around the marriage of the brother and the sister. These Mystery-Cults and their ceremonies are steeped in the idea of the sexual union.

We find this idea elsewhere as well, for example among the Gnostics. Dieterich mentions, on the testimony of Irenæus, a Gnostic group, the Markosians, among whom the union with the deity is conceived as a spiritual marriage; their rites of initiation represent this πνευματιχὸς γάμος.

The frequency of the sexual symbols (the phallus or the female organs) in the different religions [12] and, in those

[11] Cf. Cumont, *Les religions orientales,* p. 86. Hepding, *Attis,* p. 193. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie,* 1906, p. 1541.

[12] Tertullian, in his pamphlet against the Valentinians, seems to admit that at the moment of the epoptia, the last act of the Eleusinian Mysteries, a male member was exhibited. Clement of Alexandria, in his *exposé* of the myth of the Cabiri, speaks of the basket in which the phallus of Dionysus was hidden. The phallic symbol played a part in

of the Mysteries, the constant return to sexual symbolism may shock or scandalise or, at any rate, bore some persons. But we must learn to look truth in the face and, instead of being shocked by appearances, seek to solve the problem which they raise. It is not our fault if things are so. The frequency of sexual symbols in the religions of humanity is a fact. We must accept this fact and see what lies beneath it.

We have endeavoured to show how the ideas of fecundity, of seed-sowing, born through contact with the labours of agriculture, must have immediately awakened in man those associations of ideas, those psychic complexes, which constitute the *family-complex*. It is quite natural that the gods, originally agrarian, should have become, owing to these psychic reverberations, gods who also called up sexual ideas. The springing up of life on the earth, which is covered with fruits and grains, immediately suggests the springing up of the vital energies of man. Now, for the purely carnal man this exuberance of the life-forces attains its culminating point in the awakening of sexuality. This urge of love is in a way the keenest note of life wishing to live.

Man, however, does not stop here. He realises that sexual love is not the whole of love, that the true love travels higher and farther, that the forces which bear it and drive it on do not stop with sexuality, that it is a delusion to see in this a fulfilment. The symbol of love is a marvellous thing when one does not stop short with its materiality, when one sees in the union of two beings not merely a spasm of the flesh, but the fusion of two lives through everything that is most noble in them. Adolescents, who are

the Alexandrian Mysteries (Cf. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, p. 86, and Mead, *Thrice-Greatest Hermes*, I, p. 155). Osiris was honoured with a phallic cult (Cf. De Jong, *Das Antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 80).

still ignorant of the baseness of the world and feel life welling up in them, sometimes have in their existence an instant in which the carnal and the divine, not yet differentiated, mingle in a charming and touching innocence and naïveté. We cannot bear them any ill will for this. Well, humanity, too, has passed through this phase. It only becomes culpable when, aware of immorality, it connives at it.

In the cults we have examined there were, no doubt, believers of both these sorts. But we may be sure that at the moment when, in the inexperienced souls of human beings, the sexual symbols were born which so shock us to-day and many of which were probably wilfully exaggerated later, what was at work was no sensual and repulsive dilettantism but rather a natural urge of the life-forces. The substance of these symbols partakes of our own substance, our own clay; but the spirit that we may read into it, and that some souls did undoubtedly read into it, led people to a higher level. From the sexual love they were impelled to rise to the divine love, which kindles in human souls the fires of sacrifice and brings to fulfilment the gift of the self in its superhuman plenitude.

This sublimation, attained by the aid of sexual symbols, we shall observe in Christianity also. And here again the parallel can be easily traced. It may be remarked that among the Jews themselves, and in the Old Testament, the relation between man and God, or rather between the chosen people and their God, is sometimes represented as a marriage and contrasted with the relations of the same people with the false gods who are then, on the contrary, regarded as adulterers. We find this image in the prophets, for example in Hosea, Chaps. I and III, and in Ezekiel, Chaps. XVI and XXIII. In the New Testament also, the idea of the marriage of Christ with the Church is advanced; here

the symbol is entirely anagogical, but it exists nevertheless. It is in this sense and by the aid of this symbol that people have begun to expound the Song of Songs, and it is thanks to the exegesis in question that this love-poem has remained in our Sacred Canon; it so remains as an irrefutable evidence of the importance of sexual symbols in a religion that is yet freer than any other from sexuality.

Finally, it is hardly necessary to recall the *mystic union* of the saints of the Middle Ages with the divine bridegroom, the union of which Saint Catherine remains the prototype, but which we find also in the case of Saint Theresa, in Marguerite-Marie Alacoque, Margarete Ebner (b. 1240), and Adelaide Langmann (d. 1375). At times these unions present a form which is entirely sensual, as in the scene of the transverberation of Saint Theresa; at times, on the contrary, the sensual aspect is almost completely effaced before the mounting spirituality. But the sexual roots of the symbol can be found everywhere.

Jesus himself is called the *bridegroom* when, replying to those who reproached his disciples for not fasting, he said to them: "Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the *bridegroom* is with them? As long as they have the *bridegroom* with them they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the *bridegroom* shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." (Mark ii, 19.)

3. A third manner of representing the union of man with the divinity, which may be found in the Mysteries, but which is also to be discovered abundantly elsewhere, is to consider it under the *symbols of paternity and sonship*. Dieterich, well before the birth of psycho-analysis, alluded to the very frequent relations of paternity and filiality in the various religions. He pointed out that in this one could see the transference into the religious domain of the most intimate earthly bond that exists between men. He also

laid stress on the fact that the relations between the child and its father or mother are among the purest and the most concretely representable that can be imagined, but that nevertheless religious thought had first conceived of begetting or creation by the divinity after the pattern of purely human processes.

Psycho-analysis, by showing us how deeply tinged with sexual colours these relations of the child with the father and mother are from the beginning, how deeply the family-complex sinks its roots into the child's sexuality, casts a shadow over the purity of which Dieterich spoke. On the other hand, it confirms his observations.

Father-gods abound on all sides; but the conception of this paternity undergoes a curious evolution. Thus we may say that *Zeus pater,* the Jupiter of the ancients, is hardly anything else than the chief of the cultural community and the family community; his is a vague and quite general paternity. The concept of the *Earth Mother,* which one observes in so many religions, also has at the beginning this general and indeterminate character. But little by little, and particularly in the Mysteries, the meaning of these words father and mother, applied to the gods, becomes more precise and takes on a more strictly passional, a more emotional colour. Examples of this abound in these cults.

There is Mithra, for example, who appears as the father of the initiate. Porphyry calls him "Mithra, creator of all things and father." In the liturgy of Mithra, to which we have already alluded, Helios, who speaks in the name of the mystic, presents himself to Mithra as his *son begotten to-day.* The highest grade of the clergy, those who are charged with receiving the initiates, are called *the fathers* (*πατέρες*). They represent, in some fashion, the paternity of the god himself.

Then there is Cybele. The Mother of the gods, the

Great Mother, more and more attests her maternal character until, at the moment of the appearance of Christianity, she can be assimilated as the Virgin Mother. The same is true of *Isis*.[13] The initiate who has performed the sacramental rites of these religions is convinced that, after having passed through death, he will be united with the divinity as a child is united with its father or its mother. The question is no longer one of a general, universal maternity. The thought has evolved under the influence of new sentiments that have surged up in the hearts of the initiates. They want to be assured that the general mother, the Earth, the mother of all, is for themselves an entirely personal mother. At this point affectivity enters into play, in the individual emotional life; and henceforth the family-complex, the psychic summary of this life in infancy, will give its special stamp to the new conceptions that appear.

It often happens, for example, that the initiates of these communities are known among themselves as brothers; this is the case in the cult of Mithra, it is the case with the Serapeum of Memphis. In the Phrygian and Lydian inscriptions one often finds the communities designated under the name of *φράτραι* (brotherhoods).

It is hardly worth while to point out how marked a parallel this paternal and filial symbolism has in Christianity. We may cite the name of *Father* applied almost exclusively by Jesus to God; the name *brothers* adopted by the first Christian churches in order to designate their members before they assume the style of "Christians" which

[13] Cf. DREXLER, *Isis*, in Roscher's *Lexikon*.
ERMAN, *Die ägyptische Religion*, 1909.
ROEDER, *Isis*, in Pauly, Real Encyclop. IX, 1916.
BENRATTS, *Zur Geschichte der Marienverchrung*, Theol. Studien und Kritiken, 1886, pp. 1-42.
REITHMAYR, Art. *Maria* in Wet und Welt Kirchenlexikon, VIII, 1893, p. 723.
ZOECKLER, Art. *Maria* in *Herzog* Realencyclop. XII, 1903, pp. 313-315.

they are later to make a title of glory and honour; the expression *Son*, designating Jesus Christ; the relation between father and son representing the ideal of the perfect communion. We have only to read the reply of Jesus to Philip in Chap. XIV, v. 8, of the Gospel according to Saint John, Chap. VIII of the Epistle to the Romans, Chaps. III and IV of that to the Galatians, to have an idea of the place which the symbols of father and son occupy in the primitive Christian religion.

Finally, we must also mention a Christian custom which is interesting from this point of view, that of the *godparent*. The child is presented for baptism by a godfather and a godmother and not by its own parents. There is something strange in this which may well have come from the Mystery-Cults, in which a *father*, that is an old initiate, presented the neophyte and performed the initiation in turn. What is interesting here is that this paternal relation was taken so seriously in the Church that the Code of Justinian forbade the marriage of the godmother or the godfather with the godchild, and that even to-day the Roman catechism regards such a marriage as incestuous. We have here a striking example of the popular tendency always to return to a material conception of the spiritual relations which unite human beings. From the notion of a Father in the spirit the people have a constant propensity to return to carnal relations; and what we observe so markedly here in the idea of the godparent, we encounter again in the idea which the people always tend to form of the paternity of God. It is this tendency, in perpetual struggle against the spiritualisation of the symbols, which leads the faithful back to the gross and earthy conceptions of the family-complex.

Let us now try to form an idea of the point in religious evolution attained in the Mystery-Cults. It is very difficult,

not to say impossible, to mark the exact limit of this. We may, however, attempt to do so approximately. We have passed the stage of the naturalistic or purely agricultural conceptions. The *father* and the *mother,* Attis, Cybele, Dionysus or Mithra, Isis and Serapis are no longer fathers like Zeus or mothers like the primitive Cybele. On the other hand, these cults are strongly tinged with sexuality. These fathers and mothers are at the same time conceived of as *lovers* and *mistresses.* The beautiful female votaries of Isis see her at times as the eternal mistress; the female adorers of Cybele weep for the death of Attis, no doubt joining with their pious tears many profane memories. It was not for nothing that the Fathers of the Church regarded these cults as unworthy of Christian purity. They represent a stage of psychism in which the sexual and the religious are still undifferentiated.

On the other hand, there are also traces of spirituality in these cults which on certain sides render them greatly superior to those which preceded them. There is no doubt that certain souls who participated in them rose to a fairly high level on the paths of sublimation. They were themselves on the boundary-line where the choice can be made. The conception we find in them of the gods and the divine life springs at once from the infantile family-complex and from this complex after it has been sublimated. Their symbolic figures have, as we have seen, a double meaning, and can thus lead their votaries much higher or let them down to a lower plane.

4. To conceive of the divinity as paternal or maternal and of the faithful as occupying a filial position implies very special reciprocal relations which influence the idea one forms of the union with God. The religious communion, the divine life will gradually come to be considered as the result of a new birth in which the god procreates

the believer. The paternal notion of the god soon brings in its train the idea of the *new birth* as the centre of the life of piety. This, therefore, is the central conception which one finds in the Mystery-Religions, though it is not, to be sure, an exclusive property of theirs. We already find the idea of the new birth in the primitive religions: the initiation ceremonies of the savages reveal its elementary features. To become an effective member of the tribe or the clan, one has to die and be reborn to a new life. The young man is put to death symbolically; then there are disclosed to him those secrets that awaken one to the new life.[14] These symbols of a new birth appear, for the rest, as we follow them through the different religions, to correspond to the three stages of the idea which we have already indicated. In the beginning they seem to be nothing more than *naturalistic symbols;* they signify the births and deaths that we witness in nature (winter, summer, etc.). Then they become *sexual;* the natural births observed in the things about him are transferred by man to the sphere of the interests that most closely touch him. The divine life is conceived as a human life, and sexuality plays the great rôle in it (phallic cults, ideas of a return to the mother, hierogamies, etc.). But the life of the spirit grows and raises itself upon this deep foundation. The birth becomes something purely spiritual, a pneumatic act; all the tendencies are sublimated; we reach the idea of *conversion,* which crowns the development.

These three stages are perceptible in the Mystery-Religions; we find traces of them here. But the third tends to establish itself more solidly here than in all the religions that have come before. In the Mystery-Religions the

[14] See the numerous examples which Silberer has collected in his little book *Durch Tod zum Leben,* and the bibliography below, p. 263 (note 9).

human soul finally arrives at the spiritual conception of the new birth as the secret of the union with the god. Attis, Mithra, Dionysus are gods who die and rise again, and the believer dies with them to be born to a new life. The Epoptie, the supreme initiation of the Eleusinian Mysteries, is a symbol of new birth: what can the ear of wheat, plucked in silence and presented to the initiate, represent but this great natural fact of the new birth which the silence and the plucking transform into a profound phenomenon that is experienced by the soul?

Baptisms of water and blood, sacred feasts, are only the means of arriving at this new life, of rendering it possible by purification from old stains and the assimilation of spiritual food.

To find a god, contact with whom leads one to this death of the evil instincts and this resurrection of all that is spiritual in us, is the unceasing aspiration which shines out through the evolution of religion and culminates in these Mystery-Cults, in which at last it creates its object symbolically. The gods of the Mysteries are the most adequate symbols that paganism could find to respond to its intense need of a new and different life.

5. But this is not all. In the Mystery-Cults we find a fifth idea forcibly expressed, and this is precisely that of a progressive spiritualisation, the necessity of *rising, mounting* in order to unite oneself with the god, of not remaining at the lower stages and in the earthly phase of the symbols. This subconscious tendency, which stirred in the souls of the believers and tormented them, unaware as they were of it, took shape in a conception which we constantly meet with in the depths of the Greco-Roman paganism of the Hellenistic period: this is the idea of the *ascension of the soul to heaven.*

This idea, to be sure, appears in much more ancient

times, but never with such clearness and such insistence. The ancient Greeks and the peoples of remote antiquity already knew of *journeys of the soul,* but these were often journeys to the infernal regions, descents into hell, catabases, with *obstacles,* such as encounters with various monsters, menaces of all sorts, the crossing of the bridge of the dead or the passage of mysterious rivers on foot or on horseback. The Babylonian [15] descent of Ishtar into hell and the Egyptian Book of the Dead are evidences of these ideas. They have, as a matter of fact, persisted even in Christianity. Think of Dante's Hell, for example, followed as it is, of course, by Purgatory and the ascension into heaven. Dr. Maeder has expounded its significance in a lecture delivered at the Athenæum in Geneva, and later published under the title *Guérison et évolution dans la vie de l'âme.* (Rascher, Zurich, 1918.)

That a *journey of the soul is necessary* is, then, the primitive idea. But observe its development: this journey is a *progress upwards,* an elevation, an ascension. We can see this development even among the primitive peoples. For example, the Winnipegs of America imagine that the soul mounts to paradise by the *Milky Way.* Among the Greeks, the Germans, the Hindus, the Iranians there exist similar conceptions and symbols. Very often there appear those of the *ladder,* the *stairway,* or the *mountain,* by which one reaches heaven (Jacob's ladder, the Olympus of the Greeks, the stairway with seven doors in the liturgy of Mithra). At times a *charger* or a *chariot* bears the hero to heaven in a whirlwind: Bellerophon, Pegasus, Elijah and the fiery horses; sometimes a *ship,* the Egyptian ship of the sun; sometimes it is a *bird* which bears the soul away on its wings: we find, for example, that in the initiation into the

[15] Cf. Dhorme, Paul, *Choix de textes religieux assyro-babyloniens, transcriptions, traductions, commentaire.* Paris, Lecoffre, 1907, pp. 326 et seqq.

cult of Mithra one of the orders of initiates bears the name of *eagles*.

This idea of a necessary ascension, which is very strongly marked also in the *Gnostic doctrines* (so much so that it was made the centre of these doctrines),[16] and in such liturgies as that of Mithra, is the expression of the tendency towards *sublimation*. To the forces that mount, that rise, that ennoble must be given the victory. The symbol is at first uncertain; it is simply the necessity of a movement. Then it becomes definite; it is not to be a movement downward, towards the infernal regions, but upward, towards heaven, a movement hindered, it is true, by obstacles, such as monsters or guarded gates, which express the difficulties to be overcome and for which one must have the password. Then at last it becomes spiritual elevation through inner purity and the sanctification of life. In Christianity, this last form of the elevation triumphs, but the other, the more material conceptions, are not vanquished; traces of them remain, for example, in the *Ascension of Jesus Christ* and the *Assumption of the Virgin*. There still exists the tendency to replace the spiritual by the material, a sublimation by a mounting of the body into heaven. But none the less, the symbol helps souls that are open to the Spirit to grasp the meaning of the mystic elevation.

§ 3. DIFFERENCE IN THE OUTCOME OF THE TWO PROPHETIC LINES

Briefly to sum up what we have just stated, we observe that there exists what I have called the *prophetic line*, which can be discerned in paganism and which ends in the prodigious and at the same time disconcerting efflorescence

[16] Cf. Anz, Wilhelm, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Gnostizismus ein religionsgeschichtlicher Versuch*. Leipzig, Heinrichssche Buchh., 1897.

of the Mystery-Cults. The study of their symbolism and their liturgy, their rites and ceremonies reveal to us in these cults the culmination of a psychological development in which the deepest impulses and subconscious desires of humanity, cultivated from the earliest times, have played their part. Now this development, in which are united all the most contradictory psychic tendencies that stir in the depths of the human soul, succeeds nevertheless in determining certain of the broad lines of the ideal towards which, with all its forces, the religious psyche aspires. These broad lines, so far as we have been able to grasp them, may be grouped under the form of the following desires:

1. That there shall be several gods or one god with whom man may unite himself in a fashion that is at once intimate and, as it were, substantial, a union like that of nourishment with him who is nourished by it; that the god shall enter the man in some sort of physical way.

2. That this union shall also resemble that of love, in which the personalities melt one into the other (sexual union).

3. That these relations between the man and the god shall assume the character of a filial and paternal kinship.

4. That this religious relation shall end in a new life that is like a new birth.

5. Finally, that this whole process may partake of the nature of sublimation, that it may constitute a rise, an elevation towards the heights, an ascension from earth to heaven.

Such is the deep desire, the aspiration, multiple in its symbols but one at its source, which reaches its consummation in the Mystery-Cults. It satisfies itself, or rather seeks to express itself, in the creation of divine figures, divine personalities borrowed from the ancient cults, but transformed into the image of those subconscious desires which

man preserves alive within him. He creates, or rather he imagines, the gods of which he has need after ancient models that serve him as a foundation, but he endows them with features that respond to the inner urge that animates him. Many of these features are still soiled with the mud and the clay that cling to what is most alive within us, as the vein-stone clings to the diamond; but in them also, here and there, are the adamantine lights that shine over these divine faces and animate them.

We are still, however, in the region of dreams; they are artificial creations, these gods; we have never encountered them along the roads of humanity; they are factitious; they are like the messianic figures of prophecy in which nothing yet corresponds with historic reality. The symbols that express the strongest subconscious aspirations of the soul have been attached, as it were, to the ancient, mythical beings in an endeavour to galvanise them, to stamp them with the effigy of human desire; but that is all! Lacking in themselves the force of faith, the power of hope necessary to enable them to await stout-heartedly the future appearance of the god in whom they believe, the pagans projected into the past the figure of the god they desired. They preferred to imagine that he had already lived; and thus they escaped the poignant torments of faith, which relies upon the future for certitude, and took hold of it at once.

In this lies the great, the noteworthy, difference between Hebrew prophecy and what we might call the prophetic development of Greco-Roman paganism. In both the human soul laboured according to the same laws; in both the deep vital urge that calls upon a god manifested itself along the same lines, modelling messianic figures. But in the Jewish line there appeared, at a certain moment in the history of the race, a historic personality who gathered up in himself the lines that had been sketched prophetically

and found in himself the secret of living and the strength to live the highest and the most divine conceptions of his race, to desire to realise them and to offer himself towards their realisation. There appeared among the Jews a man who, thanks to circumstances which we do not have to analyse and a strength of which, for the moment, we do not have to ask the secret, lived the life of the foretold Messiah. This heroic achievement, for the rest, broke him and killed him; for in the midst of a world attached to evil, he cast off all the lower traits of the figure that had been dreamed of, so as to realise only its sublimity.[17]

In the line of Hellenistic paganism no personality is to be found who takes it upon itself to be the expected Saviour. Why? We do not have to inquire into this. We may never know perhaps; the fact remains simply to be stated. Along this line the dream remained a dream, which was never outwardly translated save through the expressive symbolism of the Mystery-Cults. No one projected into an actual life what the human soul chanted prophetically in the depths of itself. No one appeared who could pass through the sieve of reality the vital elements of this dream and its morbid elements. Its elements, undifferentiated, affirmed themselves in symbols which, in their turn, were undifferentiated. In the final reckoning, if Christianity triumphed it was because Jesus Christ lived.[18]

One word more! Christianity triumphed, we have said, because Jesus Christ lived; it is in the secret of the personal life that the triumph of the Christian salvation, of the Christian religion, consists. But because Jesus lived and triumphed it does not mean that henceforth, in some

[17] Here we arrive, in the last analysis, at the mystery of personality. And it is in this that the whole Christian revelation consists. The latter is entirely summed up in the mystery of a personality.

[18] This fact and this contrast, in themselves alone, seem to me more striking than all the dogmatic definitions with which Christian piety has sought to glorify the figure of Christ.

magic way, all men are going to live, that all are to be necessarily participants, and exclusively participants, of the Spirit which triumphed in him. In reality, as we observe, the baser tendencies which manifested themselves before him, in the constitution of the Mystery-Cults, for example, were not sublimated at once in all men by the fact that a life had carried them in itself to sublimation. If the summit was reached in the life of Christ, if the deification of life took place in full view of humanity, this fact is far too spiritual to imply any sort of prestidigitation, any new magic, by which, artificially and at a single stroke, men are to become divine. The struggle remains; man continues to be what he has been; he has not been stripped of his flesh because Jesus gave his own. Human psychology has not changed, and consequently the psychic energies retain their ambivalence, their opposite polarisations.

We see in Christ a victory and triumph, but not in the Christianity that followed. Little by little there reappeared at the heart of the new religion all the tendencies which had played their part in the others. In the rites, in the very sacraments of Christianity, in its dogmas as well as its doctrines, and very quickly indeed, in the very first centuries, these deforming elements began to operate. The person of Christ himself became a symbol, instead of remaining the reality that had been lived; in the heart of the Christian communities people again began to dream and talk of the redemption instead of living it. They made a mythical figure of Jesus, a Mystery-god like the others; they debased him to the level of the others, almost unawares, and supposing that they were honouring him the more. Hence the type of Christianity which the Roman Empire bequeathed to us and in the meshes of which we have not yet ceased to struggle. All the historical criticism we have, and all the exegesis, and the efforts of a discern-

ing psychology in addition, are scarcely enough to enable us to rediscover, beneath these deteriorations, the living Christ as he was in life. We cannot open this chapter here or examine primitive Christianity from the point of view of the psychic tendencies which appear in it. This would be an immense task and one of the highest interest, but I can only call attention to it here. But let us boldly affirm that what bears the name of *Christian* to-day is nevertheless not all of Christ. The fact, which has often been stated (several contemporary men of letters have already remarked upon it)[19] that paganism has had its revenges in the very heart of Christianity, may not be exactly true, but it is almost true.[20] It would be more accurate to say that the carnal tendencies which prevailed in so many of the pagan religions have not ceased to influence men because Christ has lived. They have been sublimated in a few individuals and some of them have been sublimated in all of us, but the others continue their work; and the Christian struggle consists in a constant effort towards an always more complete sublimation. We are engaged in this process, which ever continues. But the lived reality still exists; and it is to this, to the life of Jesus,[21] that we shall now turn.

[19] Cf. BARRÈS, *La grande pitié des Églises de France.* Paris, Emile-Paul, 1914.
ROMAIN-ROLLAND, *Colas Breugnon.* Paris, Ollendorff (pp. 56, 69).
[20] Cf. LUCIUS, *Die Anfänge des Heiligenkults in der christlichen Kirche,* 1904.
SAINTYVES, P., *Les Saints, successeurs des dieux,* 1907.
[21] This life constitutes, we are convinced, the point of departure and the most powerful force that has ever been given to human individuals to assist them in effectuating the sublimation towards which they aspire. What was lived here does not die. The life of Jesus is an affirmation and a demonstration of the sublimation of the human instincts towards the divine, and in consequence an inalienable guaranty, inscribed in history, which allows us never to despair of the struggle and furnishes us with a sure foundation for it. The life of Christ thus introduces into the world new values which nothing can ever again wrest from humanity. In this sense, it modifies even the psychology of man, or rather adds to it a new dynamic which, without changing the internal mechanism, permits him to transcend limits that he could not transcend otherwise.

CHAPTER III

THE DOCUMENTS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

BEFORE we plunge into our subject, there is one more question which demands our attention, that of the sources we possess on the life of Jesus. Are they sufficient? Do they bring before our eyes an image of Christ which corresponds to the lived reality? For more than a century this point has been an endless bone of contention among the theologians and a whole literature has sprung from the divergences of opinion to which it has given rise. The question is now far enough advanced for us to be able to sum up the debate. I shall do this very rapidly, so as to be able to determine later the attitude that we shall take towards the evangelical documents.

In the way of sources of the life of Jesus, we have virtually nothing aside from the New Testament. The Roman historians yield us one very obscure allusion of Suetonius in the biography of Claudius and the celebrated passage in the Annals of Tacitus (xv, 44) in which this historian speaks of the sect of the Christians whom Nero, in the year 64, in order to divert from himself the suspicion of the masses, accused of having burned Rome. "The originator of this sect," he says, "was Christ, who was executed under the emperor Tiberius Cæsar by the procurator Pontius Pilate." That is all.

Among the Jewish writers, we may cite Flavius Josephus as referring (Ant. XVIII, iii, 3) to Jesus; it is generally held to-day, however, that the passages in which he is mentioned are later interpolations by a Christian hand.[1] As

[1] This, however, was not the opinion of Renan (*Vie de Jésus,* introd. p. xl) who regards the passage as authentic.

for the rabbis of the period that followed, they afford us nothing but a malignant caricature of a few passages of the gospel tradition. Thus there is little or no information concerning Jesus to be derived from profane history. His existence is affirmed by Tacitus, but we are furnished with no details in regard to his life.

1. Passing to the New Testament, we are confronted first with Saint Paul and his epistles. Here we find a certain amount of precise though not very full information about the earthly life of Jesus Christ, not enough, however, to give us a general impression of what he was. What concerned Saint Paul first and foremost was a mystical experience of the presence of the spiritual Christ in himself, and he does not feel that it is necessary to speak to people who were, after all, quite familiar with them, of the details of the terrestrial life of his Saviour.[2] Nevertheless, he says enough for us to be certain that we are dealing with some one who has really lived. The attempt of Drews to show that in the Christ of Paul we have a creation of the apostle's imagination after the model of the pagan Saviour-god who dies and is born again—all this translated into the terms of Jewish thought—does not hold water.

2. Finally, we come to the four gospels, which constitute the essential and principal documents of the life of Jesus. A first remark bearing on the quality of these documents. They are not *historical* in the proper sense of the word; that is, it was not the intention of their authors to produce disinterested history, with a primary concern for historic exactitude. They may be described much more truly as works of *edification*. They endeavour to give an image of Christ that will satisfy the faith of the already existing Christian communities. They claim the honour of presenting to the churches the Saviour in whom they already be-

[2] Cf. II Cor. v, 16.

lieve. This purpose was quite sufficient for the believers; they found in the gospels an image of Christ that was entirely adequate to their faith. Does it, however, suffice also for people who desire to know what Jesus was like historically? This is the question that has to be met, and it is this that has opened the flood-gates of historical criticism and given rise to the problem of the gospels.

We must bear in mind the fact that at the period when the gospels appeared, profane history itself was not written as it is in our day. People did not aspire to exactitude as their first object; they wrote the history of the past with an eye to the lessons which their contemporaries might draw from it. The evangelists were not exceptions to the general rule, and we cannot blame them for not having told us what we should like to know to-day in order to establish on a surer basis our own religious certitudes.

In order to extract from these designedly edifying writings the historical kernel which they appear to contain, people have endeavoured, therefore, to analyse their structure and fix the date of their appearance and the reciprocal influence which they had one upon another. This effort has given birth to two problems: the *synoptic problem*, and the *problem of the Gospel of John*. It was very quickly perceived that the three first gospels, those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, presented so many points in common that they had to be envisaged together, considered together. Hence the name that has been given them of the *synoptic* gospels.

The resemblance of these three gospels is immediately apparent even to the most inattentive reader. We find almost the entire gospel of Mark, with the exception of only thirty-five verses, in that of Matthew; with the exception of ninety verses only, we find it again in the gospel of Luke. The stories which these three gospels narrate

are therefore virtually the same. Moreover, the order of these narratives is often parallel; the very words are the same; entire phrases read identically in the three gospels, or in two of them. In other respects, they present appreciable differences which give to each its own character.

How are we to explain these resemblances and these differences? Several hypotheses have been advanced, which I cannot think of discussing thoroughly here.

It has been thought that this identity and these variations could be explained by the *oral tradition*. The stories that were current about Jesus were evidently repeated orally, for a time, before they were written down. But how is it possible that such a constant choice should have operated among the immense number of anecdotes that must have been told about him? How could people have agreed always to write down the same things to the exclusion of others? If the three evangelists had had as a source nothing but the oral tradition, why should they have chosen exactly the same tales? It is impossible to suppose that this accord could have been the result of chance. Consequently, we had to look for another explanation.

It was thus that the *theory of sources* was arrived at. The gospels were evidently interdependent. But which of them was the earliest, from which the others chiefly drew? It was supposed at first that Matthew and Luke had existed before Mark.[3] But this hypothesis has now been completely abandoned. It is generally held to-day that Mark, on the contrary, is the source of the two others, or at least one of the sources.

Now Mark presents only one or two passages that are not contained in Matthew and Luke; these are Mark iv,

[3] Cf. Baur, *Kritische Untersuchungen über den kanonischen Evangelien*, 1847.

26-29, the parable of the seed; Mark vii, 32-37, the healing of a deaf man; Mark viii, 22-28, the blind man of Bethsaida. If Mark had written his gospel with Matthew and Luke before his eyes, we cannot well see what he would have wished to do, since he had nothing to add. On the other hand, the priority of Mark is inferred from the Aramaic character of his style, from the fact that he is the simplest narrator of the three and the most popular narrator, innocent of all art, while in Matthew and Luke we are often aware of a rehandling, an arrangement of the text of Mark. The latter suppress the Arameanisms and the conjunction "and," which bestrews the text of Mark, and they abridge.

I have not the time to dwell upon this discussion, all the details of which may be found in the special writings of the theologians. I hasten to arrive at a second point, which is this: whence did Matthew and Luke derive what they did not find in Mark? It is generally agreed to-day that there was another source than Mark, known to both Matthew and Luke. In fact, Matthew and Luke have several passages in common which do not come from Mark and which especially relate the *sayings of Jesus*. Now, as these two gospels were written independently of one another, they must have derived these passages from a common source. The researches of the theologians seem to show that Luke inserted these sayings, which were drawn from the common source, successively from Chap. IX, v. 51 to Chap. XVIII, v. 14 of his gospel. Matthew, on the other hand, inserted them in various places. Such are the Sermon on the Mount, the relations of Jesus with the Baptist, the missionary discourses, the polemical discourses, those that treat of the duties of the disciples and the eschatological discourses at the end. It is probable that this collection of sayings was put into writing by Matthew himself. Hence the name of

the *Logia of Matthew* which is sometimes given it; the theologians designate this source by the letter Q. It forms, then, together with the gospel of Mark, one of the original bases of our synoptics, and it certainly issued from the first Christian community which, from the beginning, had preserved orally these discourses of Jesus.

In the following words, M. René Guisan summed up in 1905 these results of the comparative study of the texts of the first three gospels, which are called synoptic because of their numerous points of contact:

"Mark is the most ancient of the three gospels; it served as a common source for Luke and Matthew. These latter, in addition, and independently of one another, drew from another source, likewise written in Greek and principally composed of fragments of the discourses of Jesus (the *Logia* or *source Q*). Finally, there must be mentioned a source peculiar to Luke and Matthew, or rather certain floating traditions which they gathered and incorporated as well as they could in the body of the gospels proper."

"As for the fourth gospel," he adds, "whatever opinion we may hold as to its origins and its documentary value, it is agreed that we find here a type of tradition which is later than the synoptic type." [4]

These remarks, which state very clearly the present position of the investigations on the subject, bring us face to face with two or three important facts:

1. Mark is the oldest of the three gospels.

2. Luke and Matthew made use of sources that were still older.

3. To these must be added the fact that all three date from a period about forty years distant from the death of Jesus and make use of data preserved by oral or written

[4] Guisan, R., *Jésus et la tradition évangélique*, Sainte-Croix, 1905. Bulletin of the *Association chrétienne suisse d'étudiants*.

tradition with the purpose of confirming the first communities in the faith which they already had in Jesus.

The synoptics themselves are not therefore a source contemporaneous with Jesus; they utilise oral and written sources which are older than themselves and of which all trace has been lost. To arrive at the true story of Jesus, we should have to possess this primitive oral tradition, and to possess it free from all the legendary alloy that complicates and amplifies popular traditions while they are in process of formation. And this is not the case. We have in the synoptic gospels the echo of a tradition of Jesus that was already charged with these more or less legendary elements of which, owing to the eagerness that people always felt to know more about the Lord whom they loved, the origin was not on all occasions verified. Even in Mark, in which people have long thought they discerned the most faithful account of the life of Jesus, there is no chronology, or hardly any. Each of the evangelists grouped the facts of the life of Jesus, not according to their real sequence, but according to the particular impression which he wished to give of his activity.

In general, then, we may affirm that the synoptic gospels give us, not the exact and literal story of Christ as he was in life, but the idea and the image which the Christian communities formed of Christ in the years 50 to 70 of our era.[5]

As for the *gospel of John,* the date of the appearance of which is generally fixed between the years 100 and 150, it is difficult to attribute its composition to the disciple of

[5] Cf. in H. Weinel, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu,* Leipzig, Teubner, 1905, the following lines: "We may say as follows apropos of the gospels and the reading of them:

"1. Similar passages should be read together and compared.

"2. If a passage is found in only one of the gospels, there is no reason for considering it less authentic or less ancient than if it were in all three. If a passage is repeated in all three, this merely means that it came from Mark; if it is in two gospels only it came from the

Jesus, John the apostle, but it is not impossible to see in it an echo of his teaching. Its character is even more polemical and edifying than that of the others. It gives us the image of Christ as seen through a soul of flame which had undergone the experience of communing with him and had witnessed his sufferings. But no more than the others does it permit us to grasp, in exact everyday detail, all that made up the historic life of Jesus. More than the others, however, it allows us to pass into a certain intimacy with the Saviour's person, at least as this was understood and felt by one of his disciples whose mystical nature and gentle, pious temperament were of a special and highly characteristic sort. Here once more, then, we are dealing not with a *primitive* but with a *derived* source. Only, while with the synoptics the derivation came through the general and collective experience of the primitive Christian community as a whole, with John it came through the very individual experience of a soul that was particularly fitted to grasp certain features of the beloved personality, I shall not say to the exclusion of others, but in preference to others, which thus fall into the shadow and are forgotten.

On the other hand, as Stapfer has pointed out, the author of the fourth gospel knows, in their smallest details, a great many facts about the life of Jesus which are quite indisputable, quite authentic, and which the authors of the first three have entirely ignored.

"He gives us," Stapfer adds,[6] "a picture of the life of

Logia as a source; if it is in only one of the gospels, this may mean that it has been added by the evangelist (or a later editor); but it is also possible that it comes from an old and reliable tradition. It may be considered an addition on the part of the evangelist if he merely amplifies by a brief phrase or so a passage which the others share with him. In such cases it is difficult to believe in a special tradition.

"3. If we wish to know what Jesus really said we must go behind our gospels to their sources." (p. 44.)

[6] STAPFER, ED., *Jésus-Christ pendant son ministère.* Paris, Fischbacher, 1897, vol. II; introd. pp. xxiii-xxv.

Jesus that is much better than theirs. They mention only one journey of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem, a thing that is more than improbable, that is impossible. On this point, the author of the fourth gospel diverges from them, mentioning several of these journeys, because he is more faithful and knows the facts better.

"The fourth gospel is thus full of personal memories which it is impossible to disregard.[7] Its account of the Passion, to choose but a single example, is the most living of the four, and, among other details that are marvellous in their veracity, the character of Pilate is admirably depicted here. . . . Thus this book, which is not a history of Jesus Christ (it is too dogmatic, on the one hand, and too fragmentary on the other for this), is nevertheless a very accurate document to consult for knowledge of the life of Jesus."

To conclude, the synoptics are more nearly of the nature of history; John, whoever may have been actually the final redactor of this gospel,[8] is closer to the person of Christ. Through the synoptics we are able to reconstitute more exactly the life of Jesus as it was seen from the outside;

[7] Stapfer attributes the fourth gospel to John the Apostle. We are free to disagree with him without rejecting all of his arguments.

[8] The question of the composition of the gospel of John is difficult to solve. Exegetical researches lead to the admission of a relatively late date which excludes the possibility that the manuscript, as it has come down to us, might have been composed by the Apostle John. On the other hand, as Stapfer points out, certain chronological details seem to militate in favour of an eye-witness. Finally, the emotional vibration that makes itself felt through these pages, the joy of a moral and religious discovery, the note of an immediate personal contact with Christ are undeniable. We cheerfully yield to the hypothesis of an author who must have lived in complete intimacy with the apostle John and who, enjoying a very different philosophical culture, nevertheless respected so profoundly the living experience which he saw in his friend that he endeavoured to convey all his spontaneity in his writing, without, however, being able at times to avoid translating this experience according to the categories of his own spirit. The author of the gospel of John appears to us to be an intellectual who makes a deep obeisance before the religious experience of a humble man of which he desires to communicate to others the power that has saved himself.

through John we are able to form a much better idea of certain features of his essential personality.

But the question that arises is this: are these sources sufficient to establish the historical existence of Christ? Have they, beneath the edifying form in which circumstances have clothed them, a historical content?

CHAPTER IV

THE DENIERS OF THE HISTORICITY OF CHRIST[1]

A NUMBER of authors and theologians have endeavoured to prove that Christ never existed. Among these we may distinguish two broad tendencies: the *symbolistic* tendency and the *mythical* tendency, the one finding in the gospels a story created out of whole cloth by the primitive Christian community, the other discovering in them a primitive nucleus composed of pagan myths which were reconstructed on Jewish soil and in accordance with Jewish ideas.

As long ago as the end of the eighteenth century, in France, two pioneers were breaking the ground for these new ideas. I cite them merely lest they be overlooked. Charles François Dupuis (1742-1809), in a work entitled *Origine de tous les cultes ou religion universelle,* in three volumes, attempted to explain the pagan myths and the Mystery-Religions, and, presently turning to Christianity, identified Christ with Hercules, Osiris, and Bacchus. Volney, the second of these precursors, in his *Ruines ou méditation sur les révolution des empires,* presents his ideas in the form of a vision which he had had among the ruins of Palmyra. The adherents of the various religions are assembled there, in one spot, and are told that they have all been deceived by their priests. All dogmas, we are informed, are mythical by nature; the true religion is purely spiritual. As for the Christian drama, it represents the course of the sun through the signs of the zodiac. Napoleon enjoyed this book of Volney's. In a conversation which he had one day with the poet Wieland, he told the latter

[1] The information given here is drawn from the work of SCHWEITZER, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung,* 2 ed., ch. XXII.

that it was a great question whether Jesus had ever lived, substantiating his remark by citing Volney's book. Wieland replied to Napoleon: "I know very well, Your Majesty, that there are a few madmen who doubt it, but it seems to me as foolish as if one were to doubt that Julius Cæsar had lived, or that Your Majesty is living now."

Later the question was taken up in a more aggressive manner, probably under the influence of a more thorough study of the Greek and pagan Mystery-Religions. It was observed that humanity had always sought for a revelation, that it had often found satisfaction for this religious need by taking up again the old ideas and ancient rites and giving them a new signification, a profounder and more moral meaning. It was observed that, under these primitive rites, when the peculiarities of the different cycles of tradition were suppressed, they returned again to the same central idea: that of redemption through a saviour-god. From this it was only a step to the belief that in order to found the religion of Christ, all that was necessary was the appearance of some unimportant historical figure who could be clothed later with the splendour of the Gnostic and syncretistic ideas, and whom people would end by making into a redeemer who dies and is raised again.

This step was quickly taken. Bruno Bauer,[2] for example, attempted to show that the gospels were fabricated by the proto-evangelists, and he supported his ideas with a very learned critique which was decidedly negative in its attitude towards the texts.

Still closer to our own time, we might mention the work of John M. Robertson, *Christianity and Mythology* (1900). Robertson lays down a sort of law of evolution for all the religions; the differences between them spring only from

[2] *Kritik der Evangelien.* Berlin, 1850. *Christus und die Cäsaren, Der Ursprung des Christentums aus dem römischen Griechentum.* Berlin, 1877, pp. 387.

the environment and the special circumstances of the *milieu*. In every religion, new gods have gradually taken the place of old ones; hence the idea of the father-gods and the son-gods (Krishna-Indra, Serapis-Osiris, etc.). We find the same movement among the Jews. Little by little the Oint, the Christ of the Apocalypse of Enoch, rises to the rank of a divinity and takes the place of the Father God. To this are added the influences that have come from Greece and the Orient. Robertson also lays great stress on the cult of *Joshua* (which is the same name as Jesus) which must have been already in existence in the time of Abraham. According to him, this Joshua was an Ephraitic god of the sun. Like Jesus, he was represented under the form of the lamb. This cult entered into relations with the Phœnician cult of Adonis and Tammuz. Now, in the generations that preceded Christianity, there was a cult of Osiris-Tammuz in Palestine, in which they honoured a Mary and her infant child Jesus. The city of David was dedicated to this Tammuz, for David is the same as Daouid, which is itself the same as Dodo, a familiar name of Tammuz. From these parallels, Robertson deduces the whole story of Jesus. The *accounts of the birth* of Jesus came from the dramatic ceremonial with which, on Christmas day, they celebrated the birth of Osiris-Tammuz. The story of the *resurrection* and the *death* also came from the rites celebrated on the occasion of the anniversary of this god's death, at Easter. At this time too there was a *festival meal,* which was introduced into the story of the Passion and became the Lord's Supper, etc., etc.

We see the direction he is taking. We shall not enter into all the details. According to Robertson, it was through Saint Paul that the movement acquired its universalistic direction. It was thus the representation of the Mysteries

that created the gospel story and all its scenes. The miracles also came from the other religions. Thus the miracle of the water changed into wine at Cana is nothing else than the story of the spring of Dionysus on the island of Andros which, on the fifth day of January, yielded wine instead of water. The temptation to change the stones into bread comes from a mythical cycle from which the legend of Buddha borrowed some elements. It may also be compared with an "ordeal by hunger and thirst" which was practised in the cult of Mithra. Mithra, in fact, was tempted by Ahriman, the god of evil, and he also fasted.

For all the facts of the gospel story Robertson finds parallels in the pagan myths; they are often interesting, but we do not always quite see how these facts can be regarded as consequences of one another. Dionysus, for example, on a day when he is in flight, encounters two asses, uses one of them as a mount and later elevates them both to the rank of stars. We cannot quite see, however, what this has to do with the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem on an ass. Poseidon, god of the sea, "walked with light steps and fully clad upon the sea"; but we are still at a loss for the connection between this fact and the walking of Jesus upon the waves.

In the same line of ideas, we may also mention Kalthoff,[3] who sees in Christianity the result of different currents of thought coming from Judaism and the Greco-Roman world of the first century. The Jewish messianism and the popular Greco-Roman philosophy are supposed here to have united in it; and finally the social movements of the Roman Empire played the principal rôle in this syncretistic work.

The suggestion of Peter Jensen[4] should also be men-

[3] *Das Christusproblem.* Leipzig, 1902. *Die Entstehung des Christentums, neue Beiträge zum Christusproblem.* Leipzig, 1904, pp. 155.

[4] *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltlitteratur. Erster Band: Die Ursprünge der alttestamentlichen Patriarchen-, Propheten- und Be-*

tioned. To Jensen, Jesus and Paul, like the heroes of the Old Testament, are mythical personages. Jensen's originality, however, consists in causing their story to be derived from an old mythical epic-cycle in the library of Ashur-bani-pal at Nineveh and dating from 668 to 626 B.C.[5]

I shall give a summary of this in order to show how imagination and cleverness can supplement the critical sense when one wishes at all costs to find relations between things where little of the kind exists:

The Epic of Gilgamesch. Gilgamesch, two-thirds god and one-third man, is lord of the city of Uruk (Warka) on the Euphrates. He oppresses his subjects. The latter pray to the goddess Aruru to create a hero who will free them from this insupportable yoke. Their prayer is granted. Aruru creates the man-animal *Engidu* (Eabani), who is led by a woman from the desert to Uruk. After a duel in which Engidu is vanquished, the two heroes form an alliance. They challenge Humbada, the lord of the mountain of cedars, defeat him, and cast his corpse into the meadows. On their return the goddess Ishtar offers herself to Gilgamesch as his wife. But he will have none of her, for he knows that she has always reserved a horrible end for all her husbands, ever since the time of Tammuz. Furious at this refusal, Ishtar returns to heaven and asks her heavenly parents to create a mon-

freier-Sage und der neutestamentlichen Jesus-Sage. Strasbourg, 1906, pp. 1030.

Moses, Jesus, Paulus, Drei Sagenvarianten des babylonischen Gottmenschen Gilgamesch. Eine Anklage wider Theologen und Sophisten und ein Appel an die Laien. Frankfort a. M., 1909, pp. 63.

Hat der Jesus der Evangelien wirklich gelebt? Eine Antwort an Professor Jülicher. Frankfort a. M., 1910, pp. 32.

Against Jensen, cf. ARTHUR UNGNAD and HUGO GRESSMAN: *Das Gilgamesch-Epos.* Göttingen, 1911, pp. 232.

[5] This has been published by PAUL HAUPT in the *Bibliothèque assyrienne* of Delitzsch and Haupt under the title: *L'épopée babylonienne de Nimrod* (1884-1891) and by PÈRE PAUL DHORME, with a French translation, in his *Choix de textes religieux assyro-babyloniens.* Paris, Lecoffre, 1907. See also the translation and commentary on the legend in ALF. JEREMIAS, *Izdubar-Nimrod,* pp. 14 et seqq., in SAUVEPLANE, *Une épopée babylonienne,* Rev. des Religions, July-August, 1892, pp. 37 et seqq., and in the KEILINSCHRIFTLICHE BIBLIOTHEK, VI, 1, pp. 116 et seqq. and pp. 421 et seqq.

ster which shall kill Gilgamesch. Her prayer is granted, but the monster also falls beneath the blows of the two friends. At this the whole city of Uruk rejoices.

Then Engidu falls ill and dies, after having suffered for twelve days with fever. Gilgamesch, frightened, begins to wonder if he may not suffer a similar fate. Although he is two-thirds god he yet remains mortal. He therefore sets off to find his ancestor, Utnapischtim, who sits in the assembly of the gods, to ask him how he may obtain immortality. He comes to the end of the world, to the sky where the sun returns every evening and whence it emerges every morning. A man-scorpion and his wife defend the road to the garden of the gods. When they learn the reason for his journey, however, they let him pass, but without concealing from him the dangers that await him. Nothing stops him and he reaches the sea which, until then, only the sun-god has crossed. Utnapischtim's boatman consents to carry him over to the other side.

Gilgamesch then arrives where his ancestor dwells. But in answer to his question he receives this discouraging reply: that eternal life is not destined for men. Everything is transitory. Life endures but a while, death alone is eternal.

In spite of this, Utnapischtim is quite willing to make the attempt to give eternal life to Gilgamesch. But the hero must first conquer sleep, and remain awake for six nights and six days. The wife of Utnapischtim, touched with pity, bakes seven loaves of bread which will sustain Gilgamesch during the ordeal. But before she has prepared them, the eyes of Gilgamesch have closed with fatigue.

Since this attempt has not succeeded, the ancestor of Gilgamesch consents to reveal to him the secret of the herb of life which grows in the depths of the sea. Gilgamesch dives in and brings it back. He wishes to carry it to his own country and give it to others. But on the way, while he is bathing, it is stolen from him by a serpent.

Heart-broken, he returns to Uruk. Here, by evoking the dead, he succeeds in speaking with the spirit of Engidu. At first, through pity, the latter wishes to conceal from him the things that lie beyond the grave, but at last he reveals to him the miserable life which the soul leads in the beyond if its body is mutilated, and especially the horrible fate that is reserved for

those who have not been buried and who are therefore not received in the lower world.

Here the poem stops.

Once more we cannot well see the connection between this epic of a Babylonian hero and the life of Jesus. But Jensen maintains that he finds in these two stories the same scheme and the same succession of sayings and actions. Oh, the candour of preconceived ideas! I shall not dwell upon this any further.

It remains for us to mention two names: that of William Benjamin Smith,[6] the American mathematician, who sees in Jesus the incarnation of the faith of a sect that was very widely spread among the Jews and the Hellenists about the year 100 B.C., the divinity of which was a Saviour-Protector, and that of Arthur Drews, who made a great stir in 1910 with the publication of his *Christusmythe*.[7] Drews, a continuator of the work of Benjamin Smith, derives the gospel story from the old mythical conceptions which Frazer has studied so closely in *The Golden Bough*. In all ages men have adored the gods of vegetation and celebrated their death and their resurrection. At times these gods have been represented by, and have been as it were incarnated in, the king, and it often happened that in certain nations they killed the king at the end of the year; he was then believed to reappear and to be born again, the following year, under the guise of his successor. Later, they substituted for the person of the king his son or a murderer who died in his stead, after having enjoyed for some time all the prerogatives of royalty and lived surrounded by a quasi-pomp corresponding with his assumed position. Even

[6] *Der vorchristliche Jesus nebst weiteren Vorstudien zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums.* Jena, 1906, pp. 243.
Ecce Deus. Die urchristliche Lehre des reingöttlichen Jesus. Jena, 1911, pp. 315.

[7] *Die Christusmythe.* Jena, 1909, pp. 190; 3rd ed. 1910, pp. 238.

in the fourth century A.D. it is related that the soldiers of a Roman legion, encamped on the banks of the Danube, chose one of their number as king before the Saturnalia. He received royal honours and indulged himself to his heart's content during the feasts; then his throat was cut on the altar of the god whom he represented.[8]

Now, according to Frazer, the Jewish feast of the Purim was closely patterned upon a Babylonian festival in which was represented a murder of the king of the same type. Here Haman was represented each year by a criminal; some one else took the rôle of Mordecai, who was nothing less than the resuscitated god. What more simple than to put forward the following hypothesis: one year it was Jesus who was named king of the Purim, while Barabbas took the rôle of Mordecai! Hence the crucifixion of the one and the liberation of the other. Drews adopts this hypothesis of Frazer and elevates it to the rank of a certitude.

By the aid of his recollections of this feast of the Purim, of certain elements of the cult of Adonis and Attis, as well as a few points from Chapter LIII of Isaiah and the pre-Christian story of Jesus of which Robertson speaks,[9] Saint Paul is said to have created the myth of Christ. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the entirely mythical Christ was transformed into a historical Christ, and his birth was placed in the reign of Augustus. By this means Jewish monotheism was enabled to conquer the world.

[8] Cf. Franz Cumont, *Actes du martyre de St-Dasius, d'après un manuscrit grec dela Bibliothèque nationale,* 1897.
Id., *Le Roi des Saturnales,* Rev. de Philologie, 1897, pp. 143-153.
Wendland, P., *Jesus als Saturnalienkönig,* Hermès XXXIII, 1898, pp. 175-179.
Reich, H., *Der König mit der Dornenkrone.* Leipzig, 1905.
Vollmer, H., *Jesus und das Sakäenopfer.* Giessen, 1905.

[9] Robertson, John M., *Christianity and Mythology.* London, 1900, 2 ed. 1910, pp. 472.
Id., *A Short History of Christianity.* London, 1902, pp. 429
Id., *Pagan Christs. Studies in Comparative Hierology.* London, 1902, 2 ed., 1911, pp. 456.

After this too rapid and far from thorough enumeration of the authors who have denied the historicity of Jesus, let us stop a moment and ask what service they have rendered us. They have plainly accented certain problems that have not yet been sufficiently considered or sufficiently illuminated; they reveal to us a whole group of forces and influences which concurred perhaps, side by side with the testimony and the preaching of Jesus, in establishing the Christianity that exists. It is obviously necessary to discover just how far legends and myths foreign to Christianity contributed to its formation. But if these works are not entirely without value in that they have drawn our attention to certain points and certain resemblances, what they attempt to prove has no value at all. After them, as before them, it remains true that a manifestation of character as personal as Christianity cannot be explained save as having at its base a creative personality which gave birth to it. The testimony of Saint Paul would alone suffice to establish clearly the existence of the historic Christ.[10]

On this point there is more to be said. Certain features of the gospel texts themselves militate against the opinion of the authors whose ideas we have just sketched. They demonstrate the baselessness of their general assertions; they enable us to correct whatever in the affirmations of these authors tends to disprove absolutely the historicity of Jesus. A rapid enumeration of these features [11] will lead us to decide with all care what use we can make, for our own purposes, of the gospel texts.

1. The contention upon which rests the whole argument of those who deny the historicity of Jesus is that the gospels in their entirety are the product of the faith of the first Christian communities. Being works of edification,

[10] Cf. HEITMÜLLER, Art. *Jesus-Christus*, I, 1 and 3 in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.*

[11] Based upon the article by Heitmüller cited above.

they are based upon preconceived ideas, and in consequence all the facts they relate are to be accepted with caution.

Now it seems to me that we can grant the premises of this argument without accepting its conclusion. That the gospels are works of edification, written with a parenetic object, is incontestable. But this does not imply that all the facts they relate are disputable and have been distorted. The best proof that this is not the case is precisely that the gospels contain certain affirmations which are in flagrant disaccord with the faith of the primitive Church, and contradictory to it, and consequently could not have been invented by it or for its benefit. Let us note a few examples in point:

The primitive Church held that its Saviour was a being without sin. But in Mark x, 17, we see Jesus rejecting the title of "Good Master" which was given him and replying: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." It is evident that this pericope does not come from the community. This is why, in Matthew xix, 16, we find it modified into the sense of the general belief: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do?" And the answer: "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there is who is good."

The scene of Gethsemane, which shows us Jesus in such great agony, could never have been invented by people who were persuaded that Jesus had accepted death deliberately and, as it were, by choice. (See Mark, xiv, 32-42.)

The account in Mark iii, 21, in which his friends say that Jesus is *beside himself*, could never have been invented by orthodox believers, any more than could the denial of Peter, who was the great apostle for these primitive congregations.

The flight of the apostles, at the moment of the arrest of Jesus, could not have been imagined by men who re-

spected and reverenced in them the true witnesses of Christ. (cf. Mark xiv, 50.) We find Luke and John already somewhat disguising this.

There are, then, features in the gospels which have the appearance of being perfectly historical and which cannot be the product of distortions on the part of the Christian community since they are not in accord with its own faith. If the Christians preserved them in spite of this, it shows their respect for the tradition and their care to suppress nothing in it, even when it may have shocked them. And this care is a guaranty of historical exactitude.

2. It may be observed that Mark and the source of the Logia or Q have a decidedly Aramaic colour; one is led to feel by all sorts of signs that these accounts were born in Palestine. How are we to explain the presence of narratives of a rustic and countrified character in the body of a work which, according to the opinion of the deniers of the historicity, was fabricated by Christians of such great Hellenistic cities as Corinth, Rome, Antioch, or Ephesus? We know the type of Christian communities which appear, for example, in the epistles of Paul: it is from these urban conditions that they would have the whole substance of our gospels spring. But we do not well see how these people, especially the humbler folk of such an environment, could have fabricated stories whose accent is so purely Palestinian and even Galilean. Let us add that those allusions of Mark and the Logia to regional peculiarities, for example the names of places, small villages, persons, defy any symbolic explanation and cannot be considered otherwise than as the remains and traces of actual history.

3. Another objection is this: how can we believe that the words of Jesus could have escaped transformation when they were preserved orally for thirty of forty years before

they were put into writing? Well, we are obliged to allow for the far greater strength of memory at a period when people had much more need of it than we have to-day.[12] The same phenomenon occurred in *Jewish theology,* for example. For a long time the utterances and the opinions of the rabbis on great questions were preserved orally; they were not put into writing until the middle of the second century A.D. Yet no one doubts to-day that in these words we have the real conceptions of the rabbis of the first century.[13]

[12] It may be observed that, in general, the memory is much stronger among primitive and uncultivated people than among intellectuals, or at least a certain sort of memory, that which retains facts as in a note-book and without reasoning about them. Thus the negroes, who can neither read nor write, retain all the facts about their interminable palavers and know exactly how many guns, pieces of cotton or pots the father of their grandfather gave to his father-in-law as the price of his wife. The more writing comes to the aid of our laziness of mind, the more that a developed reasoning faculty allows us to discover in the past the useful facts of which we have need, the more our memory gives way or turns its attention to other objects. The ancient scribes undoubtedly knew far more texts by heart than our modern scribes, because they had neither printing nor writing appliances at their service.

[13] Consult on the historicity of the gospels the following works:

Bousset, W., *Was wissen wir von Jesus?* 1904.

Schmiedel, P. W., *Die Person Jesu im Streite der Meinungen der Gegenwart.* 1906.

von Soden, H., *Hat Jesus gelebt?* 1910.

Weinel, H., *Ist das liberale Jesusbild widerlegt?* 1910.

Weiss, Joh., *Jesus von Nazareth, Mythus oder Geschichte?* 1910.

Wellhausen, J., *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien.* 1905, pp. 89-115.

Pfleiderer, O., *Das Christusbild des urchristlichen Glaubens in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung.* 1903.

van den Bergh, G., *Jüdische Einflüsse auf evangelische Erzählungen,* 1909.

Guignebert, Ch., *Le problème de Jésus.* 1914.

Fillion, L. C., *L'existence historique de Jésus et le rationalisme contemporain.* Paris, 1909, pp. 412.

S. Jackson Case, The American Journal of Theology. 1911, pp. 20-42, 205-227.

Reinach, S., *Orpheus.* Paris, 1909, pp. 315-345.

Dole, Ch., *What We Know About Jesus.* Chicago, 1908, pp. 89.

Schweitzer, at the beginning of chapter XXIII of his work, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung,* gives a complete bibliography of the discussion which the problem of the historicity of Jesus has raised among theologians in the German tongue.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCUMENTARY VALUE OF THE GOSPELS

After what we have just said about those who deny the historicity of Jesus, the arguments upon which they lean and those that may be opposed to them, we are in a better position to judge of the value and especially of the kind of value which the gospels may have for establishing a life of Jesus. They certainly contain history, as our last observations testify, undeniable historical details about a person who lived in this world and has left here incontestable traces of himself. This is the first point.

The second is this: these golden nuggets are strewn through a soil that is permeated everywhere with foreign matter. In other words, what is strictly historical in the gospels is scattered about here, there and everywhere, and is surrounded by a matrix that is half legendary, half dogmatic. The person of Jesus is continually appearing in it, sometimes with the stamp of an originality that belongs to him alone and distinguishes him markedly from the traditional Christian atmosphere, sometimes, on the contrary, veiled and as it were distorted by ideas from a Jewish or foreign source that obliterates its original features. To sort these out is a difficult, almost an impracticable task, and one before which those very theologians who have sincerely tried to give an historical life of Jesus have most frequently recoiled. Indeed, one of the most eminent services which criticism has rendered us has been to show us the virtual impossibility of restoring to the world a figure

of Christ that is historical in the strict sense of the word.[1] For the critics have thus obliged us to pose the following question of principle: what is the true manner in which we should approach the life of Jesus? Should we continue to plod along in the old ways which the pure historical method, in its dryness and aridity, has pursued for more than a century? Is it not the sense of the situation, faced as we are with the impasse in which the historical method has ended, that we should attempt another method? [2]

Now to this question it seems to me that we should reply as follows: since the gospels and the epistles are essentially works of edification and not historical works, it is not for history and the historical method to monopolise the problems which they bring before the human consciousness. The question, in short, is not merely one of reconstructing the exact historical frame in which the personality of Christ evolved, not merely of being able to say with certitude that such and such an utterance is his and that he pronounced it in the very terms in which it has come down to us. These questions, which have gradually assumed the

[1] *Echt historisch,* as the Germans say. See in this connection the conclusion of the fine study by SCHWEITZER, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung.* Tübingen, 1913.

[2] *Kierkegaard,* that strange, paradoxical man who, if he was not a theologian in the classical sense of the word, nevertheless perceived better than many theologians the profound meaning of the Christian life, attempts, in a page which forms a happy balance to the statements of those who deny the historicity of Jesus, to go further than history and into the beyond; and while his scorn for the prevailing theology is exaggerated, there is in his paradox a basis of truth which we can appreciate:

"Christendom," he says, "has completely destroyed Christianity. There is no longer any question of going back, as Luther did, to the tradition of the apostles. Tradition, history, exegesis: away with all such words! The proofs of the divinity of Christ which the Scriptures offer us have no existence except through faith. Therefore they are not proofs. History which spreads before our eyes the progress and victories of Christianity, does not prove that Christ was God. It proves that he was a great man, the greatest of men: that is all. The consequences of a man's life signify more than the life itself. When, therefore, in order to understand Christ, we consider the consequences

first place in modern theology, are not in reality the most important; they have become so owing to the influence of a professional deformation which has little by little obscured the view of the whole for the sake of the details.

The difficulty of establishing the authenticity of the very words used by Jesus, a difficulty which modern theology and its methods vividly reveals to us, should not conceal from us the value of the impression which the person of Christ made upon the witnesses of his life. The matter of prime importance in the case is this personality, and not merely the verbal exactitude of his sayings; it is this which we should recover and of which we should determine the nature and the character. It seems to have been quite forgotten that this was the original concern of the historical studies.

Now in order to grasp this personality through the evidences that have come down to us, it is not enough merely to criticise the historical form of these evidences; we must understand the psychology of those who have spoken in them and discern, through this psychology, the value, the character and the nature of that person. With the crum-

of his life, we make him a man like other men, and like them subject to the examination of history. Christianity has no historical foundation. The Socratic teaching at the heart of Christianity is decidedly open to question. To teach is to awaken the memory. One never teaches; one is simply the occasion of another's recalling what he has always known. From the moment when we become aware of the truth we become aware of what we have always possessed. In what really concerns him a man never owes anything to another man; and the historic moment thus offers no interest whatever. If we live in falsehood no man can enlighten us, for he would have at the same time to reveal the truth to us and place us in a state to receive it. This only a God can do, and a God has done it! Jesus Christ was the *Teacher* and the *Saviour*. But Jesus Christ, the Man-God, is the absolute paradox, the eternal absurdity. His contemporaries were no nearer to him than the generations which have succeeded him. His life is never a thing of the past, belonging to history. A true believer becomes, through this very fact, his contemporary; and this state of contemporaneity is the essential condition of Faith." (KIERKEGAARD, *L'entraînement au christianisme*, adaptation by M. Bellessort, Rev. des Deux Mondes, March 1, 1914.)

bling of the texts and the historical vagueness in which exegesis and modern criticism are ending, it is time that we should start anew and face the fact that we are not dealing in the gospels with words alone but with witnesses, that is with human beings who are seeking to communicate through these words an impression which they have themselves experienced. The age and the integrity of the various texts are certainly important; but not less so is the psychic state which, in their totality, they reveal in this or that one of their authors and the nature of the impression which Christ made upon them. If we are to arrive at any knowledge of what Jesus was, we must know first of all what, psychically speaking, these men were. Knowing this, we can interpret the impression which they say they received from their master.

Hence there are at least three psychologies which must be taken into consideration in the elaboration of a life of Jesus:

1. That of the *first Christian community* in the bosom of which the gospels were born and whose faith constitutes, so to speak, a prism through which Jesus was contemplated. Here we must bear in mind the ideas, conceptions and beliefs, Jewish, foreign and sometimes pagan in origin, which were current in this environment.

2. The psychology of the author of the gospel of *John,* a mystical psychology of a very peculiar kind and one that has tinted with special colours the portrait which the author has left us of Christ. Here again we must bear in mind the Greco-Hellenistic influences to which the author of the fourth gospel was subjected in the environment in which he lived.

3. Finally, the psychology of *Christ* himself, apprehended as far as possible through these two prisms from which we must escape as often as we can by comparing the

texts and correcting any flagrant distortions that appear. This work obviously requires a very subtle and delicate discernment, and it can be accomplished only gradually and through successive corrections of one author by another.

We cannot hope to reach our goal at the first attempt. But the four gospels, as we possess them, seem to us sufficient sources for such a project as long as we accept them for what they are, that is to say, not documents of an entirely historical content, but works of edification in which the authors have sought, if not to prove, at least to support the foundation of an already existing collective faith in him whose story they are telling.

A slavish adherence to the letter is thus more unfortunate here than anywhere else. We should free ourselves from it, not merely by checking the parallel narratives, one by another, but also by distinguishing the non-historical matter deposited in them by a dogmatism already in process of formation and the unconscious additions that undoubtedly accrued to these works in the course of their composition from a legendary lore that was too easily accepted, from traditional opinions, from superstition and the belief in constant miracles.

Thus, without refusing the aid of the general results of the criticism of the New Testament, taking them indeed largely into account, we shall yet seek to avoid the dry pedantry which characterises some of its most conspicuous representatives who, hypnotised by the age of the documents and the purely historical value of every word, lose sight of the whole and render themselves forever incapable of perceiving the echo of one soul in another soul. Bending over the hearts of those who have written, we shall attempt to distinguish, in the midst of their emotion, what comes from them from that which comes, in them, from him to whom they owe this emotion. Let us not forget that they

offer themselves as witnesses and that, in order to understand a witness and grasp the facts that his testimony embellishes or distorts, the best way is not to trouble him with precise or difficult questions, but to listen to him, to familiarise oneself little by little with his own psychology and to reconstitute later, out of what he affirms that he has seen or heard, that of which he has really been the witness.

One word more before we strike into the heart of our subject. I have not dreamed of embracing here the whole life of Jesus. I have been content to choose a few of the major subjects which offer the greatest number of points of contact with the investigations of modern psychology and upon which these studies, and particularly those of psycho-analysis, may throw some light. I have grouped them roughly in the order of development which the present state of the criticism of the gospels authorises us to regard as most likely in the life of Jesus.

ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

CHAPTER I

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

THERE are three matters to consider in connection with the birth of Jesus:

1. The date of this birth.
2. The place.
3. The circumstances which accompanied it.

Let us begin with the less important of these questions, the first two, in order to dwell more at our leisure upon the last.

§ 1. THE DATE

It is easy to say that Jesus was born at the beginning of the year 1, since we reckon the years from the date of this birth. Unfortunately, however, it happens that the information given us in the gospel of Luke does not corroborate this assumption. In fact, the passage Luke ii, 1-2, indicates as a milestone from which to fix the date of the birth of Christ a *census* which was taken while Quirinus was governor of Syria. Matthew, on his side (ii, 1), informs us that Jesus was born at Bethlehem in the days of Herod the king.

Now, on the one hand, we know that Herod the Great died in the year 750 of Rome, that is to say, in the year 4 before our era, and on the other that it would have been impossible, during the life of Herod or that of his son, Archelaus, for a Roman census, a census "by decree of Cæsar Augustus," to be undertaken in Judæa. This would have been an infringement on the part of the emperor of

the rights of the king, with whom he was on extremely good terms. Here is a first difficulty that casts doubt on the exactitude of the gospel text.

There is a second difficulty. The census undertaken by Quirinus was indeed carried out, but it was only after the deposition of Archelaus, the son of Herod, by the Romans, that is to say, ten years after the death of Herod, and therefore in the year 6 of our era.[1] Although Quirinus was twice legate to Syria, he did not take two censuses as was thought to have been proved by an inscription that has since been recognised as false. His census undoubtedly took place at the time of his second legation.[2] And even if it had taken place during the first, it could have operated only in the districts that had been reduced to Roman provinces, and not in the kingdom of Herod.

It thus appears, from what Matthew relates, that the birth of Jesus must be set back four years before our era at least for the events recounted to have taken place in the time of Herod. But then, since the census of Quirinus is found to have taken place ten years later, the events related no longer agree.

A third datum is that of Luke iii, 1, in which the evangelist fixes the date of the appearance of the Baptist in the fifteenth year of the Emperor Tiberius, that is in the year 28 or 29 of our era. On the other hand, Luke (iii, 23) says that Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. Finally, Jesus began his ministry, according to Mark i, 14, after the imprisonment of the Baptist, which no doubt took place in the same year as his public appearance, that is in 28 or 29. If Jesus was about thirty years

[1] Cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* XVII, xiii, 5; XVIII, 1. I and ii, I.
[2] Cf. Orelli, *Inscrip. lat.* no. 623.
Mommsen, *Res gestae divi Augusti.* Berlin, 1865, pp. iii et seqq.
Renan, *Vie de Jésus,* page 20, note 1.
Heitmüller, Art. *Jesus-Christus,* II, 3., in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.*

old at this time, he would have to have been born a little before the year 1, which would seem to indicate that we must place the birth of Jesus somewhat before the Christian era. But again this does not accord with the statement about the census of Quirinus, which did not take place until the year 6.

Conclusion: it certainly appears that there has been some error in the determination of the Christian era.[3] But whatever this error may have been, it is impossible to reconcile the various data of the gospels. Here we have a first reason for suspecting the historical value of these accounts of the birth.

§ 2. THE PLACE

The question of the birthplace of Jesus is no less difficult to establish from the gospel texts than that of the date. It is generally supposed, on the faith of Matthew and Luke, that Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea. Matthew ii, 1: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem," etc.; and Luke ii, 3-5: "And all went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David; to enrol himself with Mary, who was betrothed with him, being great with child."

At first sight, these texts appear to be decisive enough. When we examine them a little more closely, however, we perceive that, far from confirming one another, they are contradictory. While Matthew presents to us the parents

[3] According to Renan, the calculation was first made in the sixth century (by Denis the Less, upon hypothetical data). (*Vie de Jésus*, p. 22, note 2.)

of Jesus as living in Bethlehem, Luke treats them as inhabitants of Nazareth who have only come to Bethlehem on a special occasion, at the time of a census, and as if expressly for the child to be born there. In Matthew, on the contrary, Bethlehem is indeed the original dwelling-place of Mary and Joseph, and the flight into Egypt, caused by the massacre of the innocents, and the return under Archelaus are necessary to make the family settle in Nazareth and establish its final home there.

Which of the two evangelists is right? Which is wrong? The question is very difficult to determine. It must be noted, however, that throughout the rest of the gospels Nazareth is always regarded as the native town of Jesus. He is called *Jesus of Nazareth.* The demoniac of the synagogue of Capernaum exclaims: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth?" (Mark i, 24). At the time of Peter's denial the servant of the High Priest says to the apostle: "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth" (Mark xiv, 67). The young man at the tomb, addressing the women, says to them: "Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified; he is risen" (Mark xvi, 6). According to John, Jesus was so widely held to have come from Nazareth that it was made an argument against his being the Messiah. To those who said: "This is the Christ," others replied: "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" (John vii, 41-42).

Perhaps this last verse will provide us with the key to the mystery. According to the Scriptures, or more exactly the prophecy of Micah (v, 1), the Messiah had to be born in Bethlehem. Did not Micah say: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is

to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting?" [4]

Now it was necessary for the prophecies to be fulfilled; this dogmatic necessity appealed to the faithful of the first Church with the same force with which it appeals to-day to so many thousands of more or less ignorant and sectarian spirits. Did not the story of the journey to Bethlehem spring from this need of a literal accord between the facts and the prophecy? There are many theologians who hold this opinion, especially as it seems most unlikely that a woman in the condition in which Mary was, in her ninth month of pregnancy, should have been forced to make such a painful journey for a simple matter of registration, even assuming that such excellent organisers as the Romans could have resorted in their census to proceedings that would have set whole populations in motion and necessitated such inconvenient comings and goings from town to town.

However this may be, and even if we do not admit the unlikelihood of the journey to Bethlehem, the fact remains that, regarding the birthplace of Christ, there is a discrepancy between the different gospel texts, and particularly between the accounts of the nativity in Matthew and in Luke. Thus we have a second reason for holding these accounts in suspicion from the historical point of view.

§ 3. THE CIRCUMSTANCES

Finally, we come to the third point, which will detain us a good deal longer than the other two because here the recent investigations of psycho-analysis have something to

[4] Cf. BALDENSPERGER, G., *Comment l'apologétique de la primitive Eglise influa sur la tradition des origines et du ministère galiléen de Jésus,* Rev. de théologie et de philosophie, New Series VIII, 34, p. 21, which places the birth at Bethlehem on a system adopted in response to Jewish polemists who accused the Christian movement of Galileeism and made a grievance of the Galilean origin of Jesus.

tell us and are capable of rendering us some assistance. This is the question of the *circumstances that accompanied or conditioned the birth of Christ*. By these I mean: the Annunciation to Mary, the flight into Egypt, the episode of the wise men, that of the shepherds, and finally the miraculous birth, a virgin bringing forth a son, that whole poem of Christmas which beguiled our childhood with its solemn, touching sweetness and still speaks to us whenever December brings back the anniversary with all its memories.

Legends is a word which we have perhaps already heard in connection with all these stories. And in the fear lest anything should snatch away from us a patrimony that has given pleasure to our hearts, we have averted our eyes from any too close examination of it, preferring not to know what the theologians [5] are saying and to preserve the faith of a child who does not question anything or trouble to understand anything. Legends: this word strikes fear into many a breast, because people suppose that it is more or less synonymous with untruth or deceit. We shall see later how we must regard it; we shall then find that above the historical truth, the truth of facts, there is a moral and psychological truth, a truth of states of mind, which can only be expressed under the cover of more or less adequate symbols and which must be respected quite as much as the other.

[5] Cf. PETERSEN, E., *Die wunderbare Geburt des Heilandes.* Tübingen, 1909, pp. 47.
MAURENBRECHER, M., *Weihnachtsgeschichten.* Berlin, 1910, pp. 57.
SAINTYVES, P., *Les vierges mères et les naissances miraculeuses. Essai de mythologie comparée.* Paris, 1908, pp. 288.
STEINMETZER, F., *Die Geschichte der Geburt und Kindheit Christi und ihr Verhältnis zur babylonischen Mythologie.* Münster, 1910, pp. 218.
LOBSTEIN, P., *Etudes christologiques. Le dogme de la naissance miraculeuse du Christ.* 1890.
STEINMANN, A., *Die jungfräuliche Geburt des Herrn.* Biblische Zeitfragen, 2nd ed., 1917.

For the moment, however, let us speak of facts and historical verity. From this point of view it must indeed be confessed that the circumstances narrated by our gospels in connection with the birth of Jesus do not accord very well with the rest of these same gospels. When one considers the problem a little more closely in detail, one readily understands my point.

Let us suppose, for the moment, that the Annunciation, for example, took place in the manner in which it has been described to us. We can easily imagine the amazement that Mary must have felt under the shock of what was announced to her. What an event would be the authentic apparition of an angel, and an angel predicting to you such things as these! How does it happen, then, that Mary never makes a single allusion to it later; and not only this, but that she seems to have forgotten it? We might plead here as logically admissible a sort of modesty, the sense that hung over her of the solemn character of her life and that of her son. This reason has, in fact, been effectively pleaded to explain why Jesus knew nothing of his miraculous birth, why he never spoke of it, and why he never so much as once referred to it, even in the intimacy of the circle of the disciples, why he never suggested its possibility. This again is conceivable. It might be admitted that Mary never allowed the secret to pass her lips, that she guarded in the depths of her soul the mystery that was at once to cover her with honour and pierce her to the heart. But it is inadmissible that she could have forgotten what made this birth the supreme event of her life; and this is what the reading of the gospels proves to us beyond peradventure. On a certain day, at a critical hour in the ministry of Jesus, his mother and his brothers set out in search of him, with the intention of restraining him because, in their eyes, he was "beside himself" (Mark iii, 21 and 31): *"And*

when his friends heard of it" (and what they had heard of was the prodigious success of Jesus) *"they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself."* And a little further on: *"There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him."*

This, it seems to me, is a decisive argument from the psychological point of view. A mother who had undergone what Mary is supposed to have undergone, who had experienced the Annunciation, then the mysterious conception of the Spirit, would not have set out to seek her son, thirty years later, believing him mad. Such occurrences would have marked this son in her eyes with an inalienably divine dignity. There are experiences which may be doubted, but this experience, at once physical and moral, through which Mary is said by the gospels to have passed, is not of that number. The sovereign impression which it would have produced could not, for a single instant, have left room for doubt.[6] To establish this must we add other proofs? The very accounts which we are discussing furnish them. Every one has read the two *genealogies of Jesus* which Matthew and Luke give us; but has it been observed that they both end, not in *Mary,* as we ought to expect, but in Joseph, who is thus clearly regarded here as the real father of Jesus? If, in the last analysis, he had not been the father, if he had been only the adoptive father, what would have been the use of these genealogical researches, the object of which is to show us how Jesus was descended from David?

The gospel genealogies are therefore in direct contradiction to the miraculous birth of Jesus through Mary and the Holy Ghost. What can we conclude save that the miracu-

[6] Similarly, how is it possible that, when Jesus was twelve years old, Mary should not have understood what he meant when he said to her, "I must be about my Father's business," if she had known beyond doubt that this father was God? (Cf. Luke ii, 50.)

lous birth did not form part of the primitive account which Luke and Matthew consulted in order to write the beginning of their gospels, that some addition had been made to it, and that the evangelists, in their simple good faith, never realised that one portion of their narrative contradicted another, the one tending to connect the authority of Christ with his Davidic descent, the other with his divine and superhuman birth? In the remainder of the gospels it appears, we may add, as if this birth through the Holy Ghost had been forgotten. They speak to us (Luke ii, 27 and 41) of the "parents" of Jesus, of his "father" and his "mother," without any restriction.[7] Let us add that there is no doubt that Saint Paul was completely ignorant of the tradition that Jesus was born of a virgin; he does not speak of it. Nor do the two oldest sources of the gospel, that is, Mark and the Logia, breathe a word of it.

Passing now from the Annunciation and the miraculous birth to the other stories, we turn to the incident of the *wise men* and that of the *shepherds,* only to stumble upon similar difficulties if we make the least attempt to find anything strictly historical in them. Is it to be imagined that Palestinian shepherds who had experienced an emotion and a revelation like those related to us, who, in the midst of a night's vigil, had seen angels descending from heaven to tell them where the Messiah was being born, would never have spoken of it afterwards? Is it not much easier to imagine them continuing to keep track of this child, going to see what was becoming of him, above all, at the time of his public appearance, mingling enthusiastically in the crowd of his admirers, repeating their testimony to the latter and relating what had happened to them? But not a word more is said about this: all the gospels preserve a profound silence on the subject. There is no suggestion of the shep-

[7] Cf. also Luke ii, 33 and 48.

herds joining the first Christian group. This silence is surprising, to say the least, and it is curious that it has not been more often remarked upon.

As much may be said of those mysterious personages as to whom we are not sure whether they were astrologers, magicians or kings, and whom later legends have clothed with all sorts of attributes, even representing one of them as a negro and baptising all three with high-sounding names. Whence did they come, these personages, and whither did they go? We must confess that it is difficult to understand why, if they had been so miraculously informed of the birth of a little child who was to perform so unique a work in the world, they should have taken such pains to visit his cradle and so little later to come and see his work. But, as in the case of the shepherds, we hear nothing more of the wise men. If, later, they had been too old to come back from the depths of the Orient, at least they might have sent emissaries to inquire about Jesus; and such an embassy would have made an impression; it would have been spoken of. But not a word do the gospels say of all this, evidently because nothing of the kind, nothing approaching it, occurred. The wise men vanish and all memory of them is lost. Their caskets of frankincense and myrrh and their offerings of gold are not spread out a second time at the feet of Christ. Does all this ring with the clear sound of history? It does not seem to do so.

Must we then renounce the poetry of Christmas? Must we surrender these tales of the birth whose tender and sublime language spoke in so marvellous a fashion to our childhood? Because we have to recognise their legendary character, are we obliged to deny that they have any value and set them aside?

By no means! It is just here that psychology intervenes

to show us the value and the sort of value that can be attributed to legendary tales, to show us what they signify and how, while they do not belong to exact history, they yet form a part of the eternal history of the human soul. Born of the deep, instinctive needs of the heart of the race, legends, myths and fairy-tales are not merely amusing stories, invented at haphazard. Under their fanciful aspect they convey in outline truths that are sometimes more profound than historical verity. To support these statements let us now attempt to sum up rapidly the discoveries which psycho-analysis is beginning to make in this domain, relating the results, as far as possible, to these stories which we have just been considering.

§ 4. PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND THE STUDY OF MYTHS AND LEGENDS

In order that he may thoroughly understand what is to follow I must first refer the reader to the preceding pages in which we have tried to indicate the general meaning of psycho-analysis.[8] It is important also to remember that the following lines are merely a résumé, too concise to be entirely clear, of a series of large and closely packed works that is being supplemented every day. In fact, the indefatigable pioneers who are carrying on this method of analysis are unweariedly applying it to every possible subject. Following the neuroses and dreams, the study of myths, fairy-tales, legends and folklore has solicited their attention. The field was a vast one, for this form of literature is found scattered in profusion among all the peoples of the earth. Let us try to see what new light psycho-analysis has shed over this particular domain.

[8] Cf. Introduction, pp. xviii-xxix.

Up to the time of its appearance three great theories had been held regarding the formation of myths.[9]

1. The first is associated with the name of Adolf Bastian.[10] This is called the theory of *elementary ideas*. According to this theory, men of all the regions of the earth and all the human races have virtually the same elementary ideas. In the beginning, the stock of thoughts, representations, images of any one people is not very considerable; and this stock, this psychic store, is about the same with them all. It is identical in its composition in the different races, however widely separated they may be. It is not astonishing, then, that the stories of the gods, the legends of the heroes, and the fairy-tales should have been found to be the same everywhere, with superficial variations only.

2. Another theory is that of the *community of origin* of the myths.[11] According to this theory, all the myths have come from the same country and from a single family of peoples: India and the Indo-Germanic races. Thence they have passed on, completely formed, to the other peoples, with modifications suited to the genius of each.

3. Finally, the most modern theory is that of the *migration* or the *adoption* of myths.[12] The myths travelled

[9] See RANK, O., *Der Mythus von der Geburt des Helden. Versuch einer psychologischen Mythendeutung.* Schriften zur angewandten Seelenkunde. Heft V, 1909, pp. 93.
WUNDT, *Völkerpsychologie, Bd. II, Mythus und Religion, Teil I.* Leipzig, 1901, pp. 527 et seqq.
VAN GENNEP, *Was ist Mythus?* Internat. Wochenschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik. 4. 1910, pp. 1167-1174.
EHRENREICH, *Die allgemeine Mythologie und ihre ethnologischen Grundlagen.* 1910.

[10] *Das Beständige in den Menschenrassen und die Spielweise ihrer Veränderlichkeit.* Berlin, 1868.—Cf. also BAUER, AD., *Die Kyros-Sage und Verwandtes.* Sitzungsgeber der Wiener Akad. der Wissenschaft. Bd. 100, 1882, pp. 495 et seqq.

[11] Cf. BENFEY, TH., *Pantschatantra,* 2 vol. 1859.—SCHUBERT, R., *Herodots Darstellung der Cyrussage.* Breslau, 1890.

[12] STUCKEN, ED., *Astralmythen.* Leipzig, 1896, 1907.—LESSMANN, H., *Die Kyrossage in Europa.* Beilage zum Jahresbericht der städtischen Realschule zu Charlottenburg, Easter, 1906.—BRAUN, *Naturgeschichte*

from one people to another. They came, for the most part, from the Babylonians, and were propagated by oral tradition and especially as the result of industrial relations and literary influences. This theory is only a modification of the preceding one in the light of recent discoveries.

But we must go further. Even supposing that these theories are partially true, one question still remains to be answered: that of the first origin of these myths. Assuming that they came from a single group of peoples, where did this group find them? How did they happen to be born in this group? One mythologist, Schubert, would have them all go back to a single model; but he does not know where this model came from. If, on the contrary, we regard them as multiple, which seems more prudent, it appears reasonable to suppose that they sprang from the observation of nature and the observation of the stars in particular. This last tendency is the most widely spread to-day. The myths are all supposed to be *astral myths* (astral theory). Some authors have even reached the conclusion that all the myths are solar or lunar myths.

This astral theory, however, while it satisfies us from certain points of view and provides us with interesting parallels, tells us nothing about the motives that impelled man to construct the myths. Why should he have attributed such importance to the movements of the stars? Why should he have built up such singular stories in connection with them? Here psycho-analysis intervenes and gives us a most interesting answer.

Psycho-analysis maintains that it was by no means the observation of the stars which impelled man to compose

der Sage, 2 vol., Munich, 1864-65.—Winckler, *Die babylonische Geisteskultur in ihren Beziehungen zur Kulturentwicklung der Menschheit.* Wissenschaft und Bildung, Vol. 15, Leipzig, 1907.—Lang, *Myth, Literature and Religion,* London, 1887.—Reinach, S., *Cultes, mythes et religions.* Paris, Leroux, 1908, 4 vol.—Van Gennep, *La formation de la légende.*

the myths. The myth came from a very much deeper source; it was the direct product of the infantile life of man. Men, or rather peoples, have given scope in their myths to the representations, the ideas, the images and especially the desires which have constituted the psychic life of their childhood. The myth is related to the dream; it is, in a sense, the *dream of peoples*. It is only later that this dream is projected into the stars; and why? For a reason that is very simple, although it has escaped all the mythologists. It is because what comes out of the instinctive life of man is not always very edifying. Man is apt to be ashamed of the tendencies which are at work in the depths of his unconscious and which only emerge under favour of sleep. These things scandalise him. He drives them away from him as far as possible; he projects them into the stars, into the very firmament. The astral theory of the myth is therefore not entirely false, provided that we complete it. The myth only becomes astral for the purpose of veiling or concealing the intimate relation it bears to the very essence of the human soul. The *astrality* of the myth is one more result of the censor.

It must be confessed that this new theory of the myth is extremely attractive. The myth here becomes the *dream* of peoples. This means that it plays, in relation to nations, the same rôle which the dream plays with individuals, and that it is the result of an analogous process.

Now in the dream, as we recall, psycho-analysis has discovered a product of the repression of man's primordial instincts by the *censor*. These instincts emerge under a disguise during sleep, and thus relieve the dreamer of the dead weight that has lain upon his soul. Myths, legends and fairy-tales owe their existence to a similar process. They also are the product of the deep, instinctive life which stirs in the subconsciousness of the race.

There is, in fact, in humanity as a whole a subconscious life containing, in the potential state, the immense gamut of all the possibilities of good and evil which tend to realise themselves. Constantly flung back into the depths as a result of the exigencies of life in society, this instinctive urge seeks to force its way out. It succeeds in moments of conscious dreaming such as hours of poetic creation. At these times the imagination, embroidering the most diverse themes, does not work, as is commonly supposed, aimlessly and by chance. Under various trappings it always brings upon the scene the same actors. It always expresses in the different stories the same desires. It paints in images which are sometimes veritable conundrums, highly complicated and multiform, the human drama *par excellence,* that of the soul at grips with life. This drama, however, is usually enacted under the colours in which it was lived for the first time, the colours of childhood.

The myth is the reproduction of what Freud has called the *family-complex,* which might also be called the *drama of childhood,* a drama which may be and may remain the schema of everything that is most abject in crime and most bestial in desire, but which may also become, through sublimation, the purest and most magnificent moral tragedy. To express it in other and better terms, we may think of man, the human personality, as a cluster of energies applying themselves to some matter, some substance; we may then say that the family-complex constitutes the initial design formed by this group of energies when it is applied for the first time to the different relations which appear to the child in his relational life with others. Quite instinctively at first these energies burst forth between the poles, *hate-love;* or at least it is by these names that we may designate their first expression in order to represent their violence and the contradictoriness of their movements. But

we must remember that we ourselves colour these same words hate and love with a tonality into which there enter as elements the results of our long experience as adults. We must, in thought, exclude all these things that are contributed by our later experience and then consider these forces in the family-complex not as brutal in the pejorative sense of the word, but as *primitive,* that is to say, enveloping in themselves all the possibilities of a brutal development as well as all those of a marvellous spiritual ascension.

But exactly what are we to understand by this term *family-complex?* Briefly, Freud claims to have discovered the following: in every child, in the first primitive stage of its existence, we discover, as the foundation of life, two great elements, *hatred of the father, love of the mother.* These are the two great psychological directions of desire, admirably symbolised and given concrete form in the myth and the drama of Œdipus who, by an inexorable destiny, is led to kill his father and marry his mother. Because of this, Freud suggests the name of *Œdipus-complex* for this primitive constellation of the feelings. It is evident, as I have already said, that we must not take these words, hatred of the father, love of the mother, in the literal sense which we give them in our adult language. The child cannot hate as a criminal hates or love as a lover loves. His hatred is expressed by the simple desire to get rid of the father whose mere presence is a perpetual obstacle to the caresses of the mother. The father takes the mother's attention, he monopolises her; he thus becomes an obstruction, a disagreeable and annoying obstacle, an object which the child dislikes, which makes him weep and cry, which must be got out of his life. The mother, on the contrary, is the object in which everything that is sweet is concentrated; it is she whom the child desires and towards whom he leans with all the force of his instinct. This, roughly, is what is meant

by the Œdipus-complex; this is the meaning of the family-complex.[13]

In the course of the child's development, these feelings, desires and tendencies conflict and are transformed into violent impulsions, which are presently repressed in a measure by education and the censor, but which persist in the subconscious life, always ready to make their way out. Dreams and poetry, which is a sort of waking dream, act as safety-valves, and serve to give them free play. For this reason we find in almost all myths and in a large

[13] It is well to note here the modifications of Freud's ideas suggested by Professor Flournoy:

"I would suggest," he says, "that the great law discovered by Freud —that all individuals, even those who are normal, possess or have possessed unawares in their subconscious, from their earliest infancy, the Œdipus-complex (incestuous love for their mother, mortal hatred for their father)—that this law, which seems so incredible at first sight, is certainly true in its generality, on condition, however, that in many cases it is interpreted in a fashion that is doubly or triply metaphorical, which often enlarges or attenuates its literal meaning: 1. It is necessary to take the expression Œdipus-complex as a general denomination which also embraces its opposite, the *Electra-complex* (incestuous love for the father, mortal hatred for the mother) which is probably the more habitual case with women, given the opposite attraction of the sexes. 2. Save for individual exceptions (neuropaths, etc.) we must not take at their face value such expressions as *incest* and *death,* by which we are led retrospectively to attribute to infancy feelings and ideas which, properly speaking, could have their full meaning only in the adult. For the little child this signifies merely its double desire to enjoy as much as possible and to suppress whatever stands in its way. 3. The two parents themselves must often be regarded figuratively, as symbolic personifications, signifying, on the one hand, the intense and inveterate *attachment* of the individual to everything which, in his infancy, represents for him tenderness, protection, help, the physical or moral joys and comforts of the home; on the other hand, his *repulsion* for the persons or things about him that thwarted his desires and revealed to him thus early the hard necessities of life.—Understood in this way, the Œdipus-complex (or family-complex) often comes to signify nothing more than the conflict in every human being between the principles of *enjoyment* and *reality,* or the opposition between pleasure and duty, liberty and obligation, the I and the not-I, etc. All these pairs of opposites, resulting in a fundamental emotional dualism in human nature, or the *ambivalence* of all objects of experience, may, in fact, be condensed into the primitive antithesis of the *mother,* incarnating goodness, and the *father,* representing the severe necessities of the real world." (*Une mystique moderne,* Arch. de Psychol. XV, 1915, pp. 200-201.)

number of legends and fairy-tales the outstanding features of the infantile family-complex together with many secondary features that appear to be consequences of them. There is in every child the stuff of a born criminal or an epic hero. Everything depends on the direction and the outlet that are to be given to the hidden tendencies of his inner nature. If they remain in the crude stage of instincts, they will be repressed by the moral law of society and will reappear sooner or later under the form of neuroses which lacerate and weaken the personality. If, on the contrary, they are led to a higher plane, subjected to lofty and noble ends, directed towards aims that are useful to humanity, if, in a word, they are *sublimated,* then life takes on a new meaning and the man fulfils the human task which has been assigned to him in this world with a joy hitherto unknown to him.

Psycho-analysis, which is simply a method for discovering and revealing to man what is within him and how he may make use of his hidden energies, has thus utilized the myth and the legend, as it has utilized the dream, in the interest of this quest and this revelation. Among the savage peoples, in Greek antiquity, in the legends of the peoples of the north, it has discovered a type of myth which is constant and always the same. Rank [14] summarises its chief features as follows:

1. The hero is born of *illustrious parents* (divine, royal or celebrated).

2. His birth is rendered difficult by the *prediction of some misfortune,* an evil omen, an obstacle of some kind.

3. His birth having taken place, the child is generally *exposed;* they want to get rid of him.

4. But he is saved or adopted and brought up by *people*

[14] Rank, *Der Mythus von der Geburt des Helden.* Schriften zur angew. Seelenkunde. Heft 5, Leipzig, 1909.

inferior to his parents, very often shepherds or gardeners, people of the lower classes, or sometimes by animals (the wolf of Romulus and Remus).

5. After a number of episodes, which vary in the different myths, the hero ends by finding again his *true parents;* he is restored to his original rights and his destiny is fulfilled.

Now all these features are simply those of the family-complex, more or less embellished. What happens is that, at the very beginning of life, the little child, surrounded with caresses and tenderness, expands with happiness. Friction, however, soon appears; he undergoes, more or less unconsciously, disappointments that are engraved with ineffacable lines in the soft wax of his memory. There are moments when his parents are occupied with other tasks that claim their attention, and he has the impression of being abandoned, set aside; the result is suffering and humiliation. The baby cries in its cradle and falls into a rage. Revolt and hatred are born in its heart, and this, naturally enough, against the persons who separate him from his mother, the source of every comfort and every caress, against the father, that is, and the brothers and sisters of whom he becomes jealous.

A little later, the child compares what happens in his own family with what happens in the families of neighbours or relatives. His sufferings, which have been very serious (we adults are inclined to laugh at them, but to the child they are the most serious realities in the world; we have only to observe with what sincerity, what an absolute assent of his whole nature, he weeps or grows angry), his sufferings do not incline him to be impartial in his comparisons between his own family and other families. He sees that the rich people, the powerful people, the princes whose stories are told him, are happier than he, or he be-

lieves them to be so. Envy springs up in him; and the more it grows, the more he desires to have other parents. He wonders whether he is not in reality the son of other persons, a foster-child who has been abandoned by his real father and mother and adopted by those who now occupy their place. This psychological process is very common. Innumerable are the persons who can remember that at a certain moment in their life this idea occurred to them. In contact with the first hardships of existence, the child quickly comes to feel that he has been duped, deceived by life, that he was destined for a royal or otherwise extraordinary career which has been snatched from him. "Kings," said Pascal, speaking of men, "but fallen kings!" Later we translate this same feeling into our lamentations on the injustices of fate.

The myth and the legend thus give scope, under the form of symbols, to the family-complex which, in a more or less unconscious fashion, plays its part at the outset of every child's life. A few examples will help us to understand the connection better.

The Legend of Sargon.—A cuneiform inscription, discovered not long since, tells us the legend of Sargon. In certain aspects it resembles that of Moses. Sargon was the son of a vestal virgin and had never known his father. His mother placed him in a basket of rushes, smeared with pitch, and exposed him on the Euphrates. The basket was picked up by a gardener who adopted the child. The goddess Ishtar cast her eyes upon him; he became king and reigned forty-five years.

The Legend of Perseus.—Acrisios, king of Argos, was already old and had no male descendants. As he desired a son, he consulted the Delphic oracle which promised him that his daughter Danaë would give birth to a son, adding, however, that Acrisios would die by his hand. In order to avert this fate he shut his daughter up. But this did not prevent Zeus from rendering her a mother by means of a ray of sunlight that passed through

the roof of the building in which she was. Danaë had a son. The father thereupon avenged himself by putting the nurse to death. Then, refusing to believe Danaë, who told him that Zeus was the father of her son Perseus, Acrisios caused her to be placed with her son in a chest and flung into the sea. The chest was picked up by the fisherman Dictys, who was said to be the brother of the king Polydectes. Polydectes fell in love with Danaë and tried to get rid of the child Perseus by sending him to cut off the head of the Gorgon Medusa. But Perseus succeeded in doing this. Later, when he was playing at disks one day he chanced to kill his grandfather; he became king of Argos and Tyrinth and finally built Mycenæ.

The Legend of Cyrus.—Astyages, king of the Medes, had a daughter Mandane. Once in a dream he saw so much water issuing from her that his whole capital was filled and all Asia was submerged. The wise men gave him the explanation of his dream. In order to avoid its realisation, Astyages gave Mandane in marriage to a Persian, Cambyses. Then he had a new dream which frightened him still more. Mandane was pregnant and Astyages dreamed that he saw issuing from his daughter a vine shoot which overshadowed all Asia. The wise men explained the dream; it signified that the son of Mandane would become king in the place of Astyages. To avert this misfortune Astyages, when Cyrus was born, sent for his relative Harpagos and gave Cyrus to him, with the command that he was to make away with him. Harpagos, afraid to kill the child, turned him over to a shepherd, Mithridates, with orders to expose him on the mountain. But Mithridates, on returning home, found that his wife had given birth to a dead child. They placed the dead child in a basket, with the garments of Cyrus, and exposed this. Then they brought Cyrus up as their own child.

When he was twelve years old, Cyrus, playing with the village children, was chosen king by them. One of his comrades, the son of Artembarus, an honourable Mede, refused to obey him; Cyrus covered him with blows. Complaint was made to the king. Cyrus was obliged to appear before Astyages, who recognised him through the resemblance which he bore to himself. The shepherd finally confessed the substitution. Astyages avenged himself on Harpagos by inviting him to a great feast at which

he caused him to eat the remains of his own son, whom he had had murdered. The wise men thereupon reassured Astyages as to his fate; for the prophecy had been fulfilled in a roundabout way, the village children having named Cyrus king; the game sufficed to fulfil it.

Astyages then returned Cyrus to his true parents, Mandane and Cambyses, saying to him: "In them you will find a very different father and a very different mother from the shepherd Mithridates and his wife." Later Cyrus often spoke to his parents of the shepherd and his wife, who was called Cyno (in Greek, the bitch). From this sprang the legend according to which the child Cyrus had been suckled by a bitch.

The Legend of Lohengrin. The legend of Lohengrin is the legend of the knight of the swan, a heroic poem of the Middle Ages.

The Duke of Brabant and Limbourg died without leaving any heir but a young girl, Els or Elsa. On his death-bed he gave her into the care of one of his servitors, Frederick of Telramund. Frederick, a valiant hero, was very brave and he conquered lands and armies for the young countess, convincing every one that she had promised to marry him.

As she energetically refused this union, Frederick complained to the Emperor Henri l'Oiseleur, and it was decided that the countess should choose a worthy knight who would fight in a tournament against Frederick and defend her. As no one could be found who desired this honour, the countess prayed to God secretly to succour her. Then, far away, at Montsalvat, near the Grael, the bell sounded; it was the sign that some one was in need of prompt assistance. At once the Grael resolved to send out Lohengrin, the son of Parsifal. Just as the latter was about to climb into his coach, a *swan came swimming over the water, drawing a boat behind him.* As soon as he saw it, Lohengrin exclaimed: "Take the horse back to the stable; I will go with this bird wherever it leads me." Trusting in God he took no food into the boat. After journeying five days over the sea, the swan dipped its beak into the water and drew out a little fish, of which it ate half and gave the other half to the prince. *Thus the knight was fed by the swan.*

Meanwhile, Elsa had convoked the princes and vassals at an

assembly in Antwerp. On the day of the meeting a swan was seen to ascend the Scheldt; it drew behind it a little boat in which Lohengrin was sleeping, stretched out on his shield. The swan presently approached the shore and the prince was joyously received. Hardly had he taken out of the boat the casque, the sword, and the shield, when *the swan at once departed.* Lohengrin was told of the wrong that had been done the countess and readily consented to be her knight. Elsa invited all her relatives and her subjects; the tribunal was established at Mainz, where Lohengrin and Frederick were to fight in the presence of the emperor. The knight of the Grael vanquished Frederick; the latter confessed his misdeeds against the countess and was condemned to the mallet and the axe. Elsa became the bride of Lohengrin; they had long loved one another. *Nevertheless, he once warned her at home to avoid carefully any question about his origin;* if she asked any such question, he would be obliged to abandon her immediately and she would never see him again.

For a while, the married pair lived in unmixed happiness, and Lohengrin reigned wisely and mightily over the land. He also rendered the emperor great services against the Huns and the heathen. But it chanced that one day, in a tournament, his lance overthrew the Duke of Cleves, who broke an arm. Then the Duchess of Cleves spoke thus to the women: "Lohengrin may be a valiant hero, and he seems to be of the Christian faith, but it is a pity that his nobility is not half as great as his renown; at least nobody knows from what country he came." These words went to the heart of the Countess of Brabant and she blushed. That night, in bed, as her husband held her in his arms, she wept and said to him: "The Duchess of Cleves has made me very unhappy." Lohengrin was silent and asked no questions. The second night the same thing happened. But on the third night, Elsa, no longer able to contain herself, said: "My lord, do not be angry! *I should so much like to know, for our children's sake, where you were born,* for my heart tells me that you are of high lineage." When day came, Lohengrin explained frankly whence he had come, that Parsifal was his father, and *that God had sent him from the Grael.* Then he had them bring in the two children whom the countess had given him, and he embraced them, bidding them take good care of the horn and the sword which he was leaving with them, and

said: "Now, farewell!" With the countess he left the ring (*Fingerlein*) which his mother had once given him. Then his friend the swan came swiftly, with the little boat behind him, and the prince leaped in and departed across the waters to rejoin the service of the Grael. Elsa fainted. *The empress sent for the younger son of Lohengrin on his father's account and brought him up as her son.* But the widow wept and lamented all the rest of her life for the beloved husband who never returned.[15]

It will be instantly observed that we find in these legends, which are so different in their origins, the broad features that we have mentioned above:

1. *The illustrious parents:* Sargon, son of an unknown father and a vestal virgin; Perseus, grandson of a king and son of a god; Cyrus, grandson of a king; Lohengrin, of unknown birth, but concealing a divine mystery.

2. *The evil prophecy:* see the story of Perseus and that of Cyrus.

3. *The exposed child:* Sargon is exposed on the Euphrates. For Cyrus a dead child is substituted and exposed on the mountain.

4. *The poor parents* or the *animals* who rescue and foster the heroes: Cyrus is adopted by the shepherds and, through a play on words, suckled by a bitch; Lohengrin is fed by a swan.

There are other details on which we might dwell, details which, according to the psycho-analysts, have a symbolical value. Thus, the *chest* or the *basket,* smeared with pitch and exposed on the waters, represents the mother's breast. The father (or the grandfather) who pursues the child and tries to prevent its birth is the father who hates the child. We have here what is called in psycho-analysis the

[15] These legends are taken from Rank's *Der Mythus der Geburt des Helden.* The author also cites those of Karna, Œdipus, Judas, St. Gregory, Paris, Telephos, Gilgamos, Romulus, Hercules, Zoroaster, and Siegfried, all of which present the same or analogous features.

phenomenon of *Transference* (*Uebertragung*) and *Projection*. The hatred of the child for the father is transferred by the child to the father, so that, in his thought, it is the father who hates him. These transferences are very common in ordinary life. How often do we not attribute to others the evil feelings which we have for them, so as to excuse ourselves in a measure for feeling them or cherishing them!

Thus the psycho-analytic theory which sees in the myths and the legends the symbolical expression of the family-complex is not without foundation. Is it sufficient? This we certainly have a right to ask. The leaders of the psycho-analytic school of Zurich, while they accept whatever appears to be true in the determination of the psychic causes which have given rise to myths, dreams, fairy-tales, to the symbols of art, religion, poetry, etc., while they recognise that there is evidently in these manifestations a product of the infantile urge of the primary instincts in the human soul, have carried the question higher, and we must be grateful to them for having done so. This is what they have found:

In dreams—and the same thing is true of myths, fairy-tales, and legends—we can look for something else besides the *causes*. In studying them we may also turn our eyes towards the future. The dreams of a sick person, for instance, do not merely reveal to us the causes that have given rise to his neurosis; there also exists, in the images which they call up, in the *symbols* which they bring to light, a revelation of new possible paths of rescue that open before the invalid. Hence the necessity of examining them also from a *teleological* point of view, the point of view, that is, of the goals which they offer to the individual, the means which they suggest of resolving the inner conflict from which his soul is suffering.

An example will enable us to understand better than any other explanation this extension of the psycho-analytic method which we owe to the school of Zurich. I borrow it from the Rev. Pastor Keller, who cited it in the course of a work presented to the Société Vaudoise de Théologie at Lausanne, 8 October, 1917, under the title, *La psychanalyse, ses rapports avec la psychologie religieuse et la cure d'âme.*[16] M. Keller referred to the dream of a patient under treatment, a young man, and pointed out the two interpretations, the two meanings, that could be given to the symbolic images of this dream. Here is the dream: it consists of two moments, two acts, or two scenes. *First moment:* The young man dreams that he is in a coach with several persons. On the opposite seat, facing him, there is a lame man. He is filled with a desire to throw himself upon this lame man and fling him out of the coach. *Second moment:* The coach forms part of a funeral procession. The father of the young man is being buried.

On questioning this young man regarding the ideas that associate themselves with the images of his dream and come to his mind when these images are called up, we obtain roughly the following:

"How many persons were with you in the carriage?"—"Five."—"What does the number five make you think of?"—"There are five in our family."

The coach in which the young man was riding is thus the image of the family life.

"Now what do the words 'lame man' suggest to you?"—Hesitation.—"Nothing! . . . Oh, yes, that's so! My brother once hurt his foot; he used to limp."—"What sort of relations have you with your brother?"—"Not bad."—

[16] This example, summarized from memory, is incomplete in its details. I trust I have not been false to the essential facts.

"Never any friction?"—"Oh, yes, very often; the family like him better than me."

Conclusion: the desire to fling the lame man out of the coach is really the desire to free himself from the troublesome presence of a brother in the family, a desire repressed by the censor and necessitating the disguising of his brother's person before it can manifest itself externally; the brother thus becomes an unknown lame man.

The funeral: on questioning the subject on this third part of the dream we discover that in his everyday life the young man fears his father; he is in terror of him; the father represents an obstacle to him. The dream therefore gratifies the hatred of the father by causing him to die, but honours him at the same time by giving him a fine funeral.[17]

Such is the explanation of the dream, according to the causal method. The dream springs from the family-complex which haunts the troubled soul of the young man. The images he calls up are the result of the psychic conflict that is in progress in this patient.

But there is another method of approaching these same symbols, approaching them from a different angle. If we were to consider the inner conflict of the patient as a moral conflict which must be solved by sacrifice, we should say to him: "From what we have discovered in your dream, your brother must be excluded from your life and your father must die. What does this mean? It does not mean that they must die *actually*. It means that *the image you have made of your father, of your brother* must die in you. Thus it is a part of yourself that must die: these disparaging representations which you have formed of your relatives. You must consent to this sacrifice, whatever it may cost you; you will then be freed from the weight that prevents you from developing normally, freed from this obstacle that

[17] Ambivalence of the feelings with respect to the father.

obstructs your life." Such is the interpretation of the school of Zurich. Instead of stopping with the past, with the search for causes, it turns its eyes towards the future; it interprets the symbols of the dream in terms of the goal to be attained and the tasks to be accomplished, in terms of the duty that lies ahead of us.

This is of great importance, and it may be summed up in the following way: the symbols which the dream employs and to which it gives rise should not be considered merely as residua of the infantile family-complex; they also furnish indications for the inner transformations that life demands of the individual if he wishes to triumph over the obstacles that have accumulated in his path. They guide the dreamer and point out to him the road for him to follow and the modifications that must be made in his personal life.

There are thus two methods of interpreting the symbols, the images which dreams offer us: the one, *realistic and causal,* which seeks in the past alone for the source of the dream; the other, *teleological and anagogical,* which, without ignoring what concerns the past, discovers in the symbols of the dream a moral bearing as well, and interprets these symbols as indications of the way in which the inner conflict may find its solution.[18]

The myth, we have said, is regarded by the psychoanalysts as the dream of peoples. If this is the case, why should we not try to apply the second of these interpretations to it as well as the first? According to the first, the figures and the personages of the great myths and legends symbolise the figures and the personages of the family-complex that exists in the soul of every child. Humanity incarnates in its favourite heroes the dreams and the hopes

[18] Cf. SILBERER, *Ueber die Symbolbildung.* Jahrbuch f. psych. Forsch., III. pp. 661-723.—MAEDER, *Ueber das Traumproblem.* Ibid. V, pp. 647-686;—and pp. 157 et seqq. of the present volume.

that it begins to live anew with every child that is born. In these beautiful stories, which cluster about the memory of some illustrious personality, we should then have only the reflection of a past that is altogether dead in every one of us. Such is the rather sad and depressing idea that is often held regarding the legends and the myths; it leaves them nothing but a romantic value, without any psychological bearing, fit at best to distract for a few moments minds that are imaginative and inclined to poetry.

If, however, we apply to them the second method of interpretation, of which we have spoken, the myths and legends begin to live. They assume an entirely different, a psychological, import. They become not merely the embellished and poeticised memories of a childhood that has wholly passed. In and through their symbols, the future task of humanity is discernible. At the moment when they appeared in humanity they were, so to speak, witnesses and heralds of the moral exigencies which imposed themselves upon this or that human group. They reveal to humanity, under a symbolic form, what life expects of it. Like the dream in the case of the individual, they contain indications of the end to be pursued and the paths to be followed, the end and the paths of which humanity is not yet fully conscious, but which its subconscious already outlines under forms that are veiled from and often misleading to those who do not know how to analyse them.

§ 5. APPLICATION OF THE TWO METHODS OF PSYCHO-ANALYTIC INTERPRETATION TO THE ACCOUNTS OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Let us now attempt to apply these two methods of psychoanalytic interpretation to the accounts, legendary in form, which the evangelists have left us of the birth of Christ.

The first will give us the results which have already been noted in several Lives of Jesus and which have scandalised more than one soul by their dryness and aridity. By the aid of this method, we shall find in the gospel accounts many of the features of the family-complex which Rank discovers in myths in general.

1. *The opposition between the illustrious parents and the poor parents.* On one side, the humble state of the carpenter's household in which Jesus was brought up, the stable where he was born, surrounded by simple folk, and the animals, the ox and the ass, which a later legend grouped about the manger. On the other, the miraculous and divine birth in which the Holy Ghost plays the rôle of father and becomes the secret and mysterious generator.

2. *The prediction of a misfortune* which renders the birth difficult. We recall the prophecy made to Mary by Simeon: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also," [19] and "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." [20]

3. The motif of the *exposure* of the child is replaced here by the *massacre of the innocents,* ordered by Herod, and by the *flight into Egypt.* The life of the child is menaced. He escapes by the aid of the supposed parents who save him from the king's wrath.[21]

Finally, the wise men, on the one hand, and the shepherds, on the other, serve to double this contrast between the illustrious parents and the poor parents which we find in myths in general. On one side, the child is hailed at his birth by great personages whom Herod receives, and who later, in the subsequent legend, even become kings; thus he is the son of a king, the son of God. On the other side, he

[19] Luke ii, 35.
[20] *Ibid.,* 34.
[21] Compare with the legend of Cyrus.

receives the homage of the shepherds; it is the common people who surround the manger.

Following this method of interpretation, the legend of the birth of Christ thus becomes, like the others, a product of the family-complex. It is born spontaneously, naturally, from the popular soul in the presence of a heroic and admirable life such as that of Jesus was; and most of the details, if not all of them, are provided by the great subconscious conflict which is found in the psychism of all children. There is a good deal of truth perhaps in this explanation, but it does not exhaust the subject.

We must now turn to the second method of interpretation, that which seeks in the features of the legend for teleological indications, the prefigurement of a future and what we may call the inward prophecy of coming tasks. If the legend of the birth of Christ is born of the national and popular consciousness of primitive Christianity as a dream is born in the soul of a sleeper, we are right in seeking beneath the symbolical figures which it brings to light not only an indication of the conflict which agitates the Christian soul but also a direction for the solution of this conflict.

Now let us imagine the problem that such a life as that of Christ would present to a sincere soul: the life of a man with all the limitations and the physical weaknesses that a human life implies, ending in the most tragic and ignominious of possible deaths, which is at the same time a spiritually triumphant life without any of the blemishes that generally go with human nature, a life that makes the sovereign glory of God shine out before all eyes, a life that was from one end to the other a testimony, a fervour of the moral and religious consciousness, a certitude of God the Father translated into action. How reconcile these contraries? How bring into accord these oppositions, this

life and this death, this triumph and this humiliation, this spiritual royalty and this condemnation by the so-called spiritual authorities? Truly, it is easy to imagine the conflict that must have agitated simple souls faced with these facts in which they were participating without being able to explain them.

We must also bear in mind the fact that the souls of the common people do not live by historical truth any more, for that matter, than do the souls of the cultivated, whatever may be said to the contrary. People always live by psychological truth, by the inner truth, first and foremost. Legends are not born as stories are born, invented with the full consciousness of the inventor. They are born as dreams are born, of an inner urge through which rise up pell-mell all the subconscious elements that stir in the depths of our being. Thus they are not falsehoods, or the work of falsehood, but truths deeper than historical truth and simply of another order; they have the multiform sincerity that our dreams have; they contain the symbols of the desires, the conflicts that agitate the soul of the period as well as indications, for him who can interpret them, of the way in which this soul may surmount the conflict.

"This man is not like any one else," the dream says to the soul. "His parents are not his real parents. He was not born of man but of God; and yet he is the son of a woman. He was laid in a manger, surrounded by shepherds; he is a son of the people, a brother to each one of us. But wise men from afar came to adore him; he is more than a king."

In the course of the dream there appear, little by little, the exigencies of the faith, the attitude that men must take in relation to Christ in order to be able to respond to the vocation which his life inspires. He must be regarded as a man, purely as a man, a neighbour, a brother; and yet

he is more than this, he contains in himself a mystery. To approach him is to feel that there is something more in him. This is the psychological truth which the legend reveals under these symbols in historical form.

And it is thus that we must interpret it, as the symbolic indication of the spiritual attitude which believers would have assumed before the great figure that approaches. Here we have the teleological meaning of this prologue, as it might be called, to the gospels. As long as we seek to interpret it from the purely historical point of view, we stumble upon contradictions or reach negative conclusions that are painful to many souls. The psycho-analytic method, applied to these accounts which it frankly regards as legendary, gives us, it appears, the only logical and satisfying issue. The question here is not one of historical truth, the verification of which would always be impossible, but of psychological truth.[22]

Like the dream, the legend is not made up for amusement. It is born of a psychological conflict in the depths of a people's soul; it forms its symbols out of the subconscious tendencies at work in the human psyche; lastly, it tends to indicate the possible issue out of this conflict by dictating to man the moral attitude which he ought to assume. When we consider the personality of Jesus, we see

[22] In his preface to the translation of Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, Littré wrote as long ago as 1853: "It is not permissible to alter the theological accounts, or to introduce allegories into them, or to transform them into natural facts. It is not permissible to deny them by regarding them as impostures; nor is it any more permissible to accept them as realities. The reality lies elsewhere: it is of a mental or psychological order, and in this sense they bear witness not to facts which actually took place but to intellectual and moral movements which have modified society more deeply than the gravest material happenings could ever do. This is the heart of the question" (p. XI).

Littré makes a mistake when he puts all the "theological accounts" in the same category, and especially when he neglects to say what he means by this phrase. He speaks of "moral and intellectual movements" where he should have spoken of the subconscious life of the soul. But his central intuition is correct; he realises that the deep

that the legend of his origin possesses this character. It offers to the Christian people the solution of the psychological conflict that was born in it through the contemplation of the person of Christ. It says to this people: "Here is a man who is more than a man; it is by seeking in the man for the son of God that you will feel within yourself the unloosening of the bonds and the melting of the obstacles that hinder your own life."

It might, perhaps, be possible to push still further than the psycho-analysts have done this analysis of the legend. It might be shown that in the persons of the great heroes humanity has found a symbol of its own highest life.

Just as, during his childhood, the hero struggles between the two pairs of parents, the poor and humble parents, and the royal or divine parents, so humanity, in every child, recognises not only its earthly, animal descent, its natural human descent, as it were, but also another origin that is mysterious and quasi-divine; it is always struggling between these two descents which torment it and dominate its whole development.

Again, just as the hero ends by overcoming the obstacles of fate, and by finding his real father again, sometimes

reality of some of these accounts was of the "mental and psychological" and not of the historical order.

A little further on, apropos of legends, he adds this: "Since they are the products of the same faculty, legends in the field of political history can be compared with those that grow in the field of theology. The former are always inferior to the reality which they mask, and we only pardon them when they give rise to some such magnificent epic as the songs of Homer. The second have a higher value than reality, or rather they are reality, *par excellence,* since these legends carry on their face the stamp of powerful forces and the causes of transformation. Always and everywhere the imagination has a necessary part to play, and we should mistake the very constitution of the human spirit, of which it is an essential element, if we supposed that it was ever absent" (p. XIX).

It is interesting to observe that in France, well before there was any thought of psycho-analysis, ideas similar to those we have described were already at work in people's minds and leading them to conclusions that were analogous, although vaguer and less well founded.

through suffering, sometimes while in the act of killing him involuntarily, of sinning against him, so humanity can only attain to the true life by finding again its true father, the divine Father; and humanity too, in finding him, sometimes discovers that it has committed against him the most heinous of crimes.

The legend of the hero is thus the symbol of a sublimation that is necessary to humanity in order the better to find life and accomplish its destiny, the symbol of a return to the true Father, of a preservation of its true origins in the face of everything that seems to deny them. Confronted as we are with the accounts that precede the story of Jesus, it is almost unnecessary to point out how eloquent these symbols become. It is requisite that this child should find again the true Father, of the race from which we all spring. The elder brother, he precedes all his kindred along the path of return to the true Father, beyond all the secondary paternities that human relations represent. With him and through him humanity may take the same road, on condition that it holds fast, in the hero, to that mystery which, in him, is more than human. Hence the legend; it expresses a reality which transcends that of history, it seizes upon a psychic process and offers it, under a symbolic form, to the good will of those who admire the hero. Those Christians who, like Saint Paul, attain to a communion with Christ which can be expressed in the words, "For me, to live is Christ," realise that the highest life is achieved through an identification of men with the hero, an identification which also causes them to pass from the relations of human kinship to the supreme paternal relation. With Christ they find again the true Father and recognise him as such, in spite of the relationships of the flesh which, superposing themselves upon it, often obliterate its image by veiling its purity.

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

§ 1. INFLUENCES

We have, unfortunately, no details regarding the childhood of Jesus save the *episode of the Temple,* Luke ii, 41-52. What were the circumstances that attended the unfolding of his soul? What were the influences exercised by his environment, the family, the local atmosphere? These are among the many questions to which no gospel text gives us any answer and which can be solved only by conjecture, with some plausibility, however, if we take into account what happened later together with the knowledge we possess regarding Jewish education.

The childhood of Jesus was undoubtedly passed at Nazareth, "that little town," as Renan so well describes it, "situated in a depression of open rolling country at the summit of the group of mountains that inclose, on the north, the plain of Esdraelon. To-day it has a population of three or four thousand souls, and it cannot have varied greatly. The cold is sharp in winter, and the climate is very healthful. Nazareth, like all Jewish towns of this period, consisted of a dense mass of houses, built without regard to style, and must have presented the same poor and barren appearance as the Semitic villages of to-day. In all probability, the houses did not differ very much from those cubes of stone, without external or internal elegance, which to-day cover the most fertile parts of Lebanon, and which, scattered among the vineyards and fig-trees, are nevertheless very attractive indeed. The surroundings, moreover, are

charming. . . . Even to-day, Nazareth is a delightful place to visit, the only place in Palestine perhaps where the soul feels a little relief from the burden that oppresses it amid this unequalled desolation. The population is good-humoured and smiling; the gardens are fresh and green. Antoninus Martyr, at the end of the sixth century, drew an enchanting picture of the fertility of the surrounding country, which he compared to paradise.[1]

"We can see the streets in which the child played in these stony paths and these little cross-roads that separate the houses. No doubt the dwelling of Joseph closely resembled these poor huts, lighted by the door, serving at once as stable, kitchen, and bedroom, and having as their furniture a box, a few cushions on the ground, one or two clay jars, and a painted chest." [2]

It seems as if we could imagine fairly well what must have been the life of a child growing up in this village environment, in the midst of a numerous family; for the gospels tell us that Jesus had brothers and sisters. The more or less fabulous accounts in the apochryphal gospels of the games which he played with his companions rest upon no solid basis. It is quite useless, in any case, to imagine him as different from the others. He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"; [3] this laconic summary of his development seems to correspond best with the reality.

What instruction did he receive? "Among the ancient Hebrews," Stapfer tells us, "the education of the child took place in the family. We can find no trace of public schools anywhere before the return from the exile. After the Restoration, the scribes founded schools, but they were

[1] RENAN, *Vie de Jésus*, pp. 27 et seqq.
[2] Ibid. p. 24.
[3] Luke iii, 52.

not intended for children. . . . It was not until the year 64 A.D. that public schools were established generally.[4] Nevertheless, it seems probable that in the time of Jesus there was a school at Nazareth, directed no doubt not by a master *ad hoc,* but simply by the Hazzan or factotum of the synagogue.

Jesus learned to read and write, probably after the simple methods of the Orient. The mother taught her child a verse of the law as soon as he was able to speak. When he knew this by heart, she taught him another. A little later they placed in his hands the written text of the verses he had learned; and by dint of repeating it in cadence with his little comrades, he ended by knowing how to read.

The school added a little, very little, to this rudimentary equipment. On the Sabbath day, the mothers also took their children to the Hazzan for a sort of Sunday school, which completed this elementary instruction. There is no reason to suppose that Jesus ever attended the schools of the scribes which gave one the right to the title of rabbi; perhaps nothing of the kind existed at Nazareth. But he knew enough to be able to read the books of the Law. He knew the Psalms, Isaiah, Daniel, and perhaps the book of Enoch.

But the great book which Jesus read and reread was that of humanity and nature. In that admirable little work *Hilligenlei,* Gustav Frenssen pictures him for us watching everything that went on about him, seeing the parable of the prodigal son enacted in his own village, observing the children at their games. His sayings are full of reminiscences. The woman who shows her neighbours the piece of silver she has found again, the shepherd carrying his lamb on his shoulders, the father giving bread and not

[4] STAPFER, EDM., *La Palestine au temps de Jésus-Christ.* Paris, Fischbacher, 1892, p. 141.

stones to his children, all these things are scenes that have taken place, that are drawn from life, observed undoubtedly with the eyes that do not forget, the eyes of childhood, observed with that clear vision which stamps things in bright colours on the soul.

He watched men; he lingered to watch them. And he saw nature also, with what a quick and fresh eye! And nature in Galilee was charming. Here again we must quote Renan: "The region round about Jerusalem," he says, "is perhaps the most melancholy country in the world. Galilee, on the contrary, was a very green, shady, smiling country, the true land of the Song of Songs and the songs of the well-beloved. During the two months of March and April, the fields are a carpet of flowers, incomparably fresh in their colour. The animals here are small but extremely gentle. Slim, quick turtle-doves, bluebirds so light that they perch on a grass-stem without bending it, crested larks that all but alight beneath the feet of the traveller, little brook turtles, with bright, soft eyes, storks with grave and modest air, free from any timidity, allow themselves to be closely approached by man and seem to call him. In no country in the world do the mountains unroll more harmoniously or inspire loftier feelings. Jesus seems to have particularly loved them." [5]

The poetry of nature sang in his heart with a ravishing simplicity and spontaneity. There are no or almost no descriptions among his sayings; but the right expression always comes to mark the emotion he has felt. And besides, who can ever explain the effect of a natural setting on the later development of a great soul? To experience as a child a communion with nature that is spontaneous, free from literary associations or coercion of any kind, is perhaps one of the conditions of the normal evolution of the

[5] RENAN, op. cit., p. 67.

religious process. The Father came to Jesus in this way, as he came to him through his conscience. He heard him speaking on the mountains of his country, through the lilies of the field and the birds of the sky.

Side by side with this source of religious education, there were others. One of the most important was the Holy Scripture. We can distinguish without much difficulty the books of the Old Testament that seem to have impressed him most. The Law, the *Torah,* with its ten commandments, was well known to him; but it does not appear that his sympathies flowed particularly in this direction. The book of Psalms and that of the prophet Isaiah no doubt spoke more forcibly to his heart. Later, we can imagine the powerful consolation and the source of strength which he found in reading Jeremiah, that just man, constantly suffering and persecuted, faithful to the end, in whom Jesus must have found so many points of resemblance with himself and his own fate. The apocryphal writings of the Old Testament were current also, along with the books that were definitely entered in the canon. No doubt, Jesus read the book of Enoch and the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach. Finally, we should mention the book of Daniel; this reflects, according to Renan, the ideas which were dear to Persia and which made their way even to Rome, where Virgil echoed them. Renan points out, not without reason, that Greece had excellent historians and admirable philosophers, but that it never possessed a system of the philosophy of history, embracing all humanity. The Semite, on the contrary, is quick to seize the great lines of the future; he has the prophetic gift. "Perhaps he may owe a little of this spirit to Persia," Renan remarks. "Persia," he continues, "had from very early times conceived of the history of the world as a series of cycles, over each of which a prophet presided. Each prophet had his *hazar,* or reign

of a thousand years (chiliasm), and of these successive ages, analogous to the millions of centuries that fell to each Buddha in India, there was made up the course of events which prepared the reign of Ormuzd. At the end of time, when the circle of chiliasms was completed, would come the final paradise. Then men would live happily; the earth would be like a plain; there would be only one tongue, one law, and one government for all men. But this outcome was to be preceded by terrible calamities. Dahak (the Satan of Persia) was to break the irons that enchained him and hurl himself upon the world. Two prophets were to come to console men and prepare them for the great event." [6]

Such are the apocalyptic ideas with which the book of Daniel and that of Enoch are inspired throughout. They had gradually permeated the Jewish mind, harmonising as they did with the messianic idea of the prophets. Everywhere people were expecting the great renewal and the work of the Messiah. On the other hand, national events had broken the people's faith in the Old Testament conception that the righteous man is rewarded here below for his righteousness and driven the spirit to seek for another solution. The book of Job is a witness of this restless and ardent search. The idea of the resurrection, of a new reign of the righteous, who would return to earth and participate in the triumph of the Messiah, became more and more general. While the Sadducees would have nothing to do with it, the Pharisees, who had the ear of the people, had adopted it. Jesus, from the moment when he began to reflect, found himself in a spiritual atmosphere that was drenched with these ideas and these hopes. They were not taught in any school, but they were in the air. The pious lived in them. A few zealots carried their faith in

[6] RENAN, op. cit., p. 49.

them to the point of exaltation; and as a result of the pressure which the Roman yoke exerted on the people, they emerged under the form of sedition and revolt. Death was accounted nothing. The zealots killed those who disregarded the law. Messiahs who were more or less politicians, men like Judas the Gaulonite, led the multitude into a holy war against those who imposed the census upon them and demanded for Cæsar the money which they owed to God alone, since he was the sole Master.

Of all these things the child Jesus heard people talking.[7] While he was growing in wisdom and in grace, he was separating, in his heart, the good grain from the tares, and gradually becoming aware not only of what was extravagant and carnal in the popular demands, but also of the magnificent enthusiasm which was manifesting itself under these often barbarous outbursts of the popular spirit. Attentive thus early to the paternal voice which spoke in him, he rediscovered it—perverted, altered, often all but unrecognisable—in these violent underground currents in the consciousness of his people. With his first enthusiasms his first sufferings were to begin: as he listened to what they were saying in the workshop in Nazareth, how many times his heart must have leaped with mingled joy and indignation! A powerful education, the talk of the common people, when it is absorbed by a consciousness worthy of the name!

Did Jesus undergo any other education than this? Must we look in him for the influence of a caste, a more or less

[7] The influence of the apocalyptic eschatology on Jesus has formed the subject of an immense number of discussions started among the theologians under the influence of *Wrede*. A summary of these is to be found in chaps. XIX-XXI of Alb. Schweitzer, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu Forschung*. Tübingen. Mohr, 1918.

Cf. also Wrede, *Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*. Göttingen, 1901, pp. 206.

Schweitzer, A., *Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis. Eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu*. Tübingen-Leipzig, 1901, pp. 109.

See also below, chap. IV, §3 and chap. VII.

sectarian moral or religious group? Did he receive some sort of esoteric teaching, of which the traces are to be found later in his own teachings? There are some who believe that this was the case, and they name as among the masters of Jesus the *Essenes,* that little known and more or less monastic order which was distinguished by its severely ascetic practices, derived probably from the Orient. M. Schuré has built up the portrait he gives us of Jesus in *Les grands initiés* on this uncertain foundation. The theosophists [8] have followed him. "The Essenes had their dwellings," says Renan,[9] "on the borders of the Dead Sea. Abstinence from flesh, from wine, from sexual pleasures was the accepted novitiate of the revealers of the truth. It is supposed that the leaders of the sect were hermits having their own rules and institutions like the founders of religious orders. The masters of the young men were also at times anchorites of a kind, somewhat like the *gourous* [10] of Brahmanism."

Two lives of Jesus, dating from the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, that of Karl-Friedrich Bahrdt, *Ausführung des Plans und Zwecks Jesu* (1784-1792) and that of Venturini, *Natürliche Geschichte des grossen Propheten von Nazareth* (1800-1802) are probably responsible for this association of Jesus with the Essenes. We have only to analyse their contents to show the inanity of the hypothesis. I shall do this in a few words:

Bahrdt, who, for the rest, had a far from edifying life, finds the key to the history of Jesus in two personages, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, who, as it appears to him, can have been nothing else than Essenes. Now this order possessed its

[8] Cf. Besant, A., *Esoteric Christianity.*
[9] Renan, op. cit. p. 101.
[10] Spiritual preceptors.

secret members in all circles of society, even in the Sanhedrin. Their object was to deliver the people from their earthy and material messianic conceptions and lead them to a more elevated knowledge. For this reason it was necessary to find a Messiah who would come to destroy the false messianic hope. Jesus was the natural son of Mary. The Alexandrian Jews, Essenes themselves, succeed in approaching him, show him how the priests are triumphing over the people, and make known to him the teachings of Socrates and Plato. When they tell him the story of the death of Socrates the child falls into convulsions, and henceforth desires but one thing, the crown of a martyr.

A clever Persian later gives him two secrets in the marketplace at Nazareth: one against the evil eye, the other the secret of curing people who are afflicted with nervous disorders. Then an Essenian priest, disguised as a shepherd, instructs him gradually in the wisdom of the Essenes. At twelve Jesus is already so well prepared that he disputes with the scribes in the Temple and proves to them that miracles are impossible.

Luke, the doctor, is then introduced to him and places his science at his service. They decide to delude the people, having recourse to miracles and deceptions, and Jesus assumes the rôle of the Messiah in order to deliver them from their superstitions. He has serious scruples about doing this. But he is obliged to obey the order; and they point out to him the high aim to be attained and tell him that Moses did the same thing.

When the time comes for him to be received as one of the brothers of the first degree, it is revealed to him that the latter are bound to die for the order, but that the order, by a secret procedure, can rescue them from death.

Here we are told that the Essenes were divided into three categories, the *baptised,* the *disciples,* and the *chosen.* The first receive only the common, popular doctrine; the disciples go further, without being initiated into the ultimate secrets; the chosen, also called "angels" in the gospels, are completely initiated. Now the apostles possessed only the second degree; they were *disciples;* therefore they did not know the secret plot and they believed in the miracles which the initiates had arranged.

Jesus had two methods of teaching: one for the initiates, the other for the non-initiates.

The members of the order assembled on fixed days in the caves of the mountain. When Jesus, as the gospels tell us, went alone to the mountain to pray, it means that he was going to one of these meetings of the order.

At one of these meetings, the Essenian authorities arrived at the conclusion that only material actions could succeed in conquering matter. It was necessary that the Jewish Messiah should visibly die and be raised again in order at once to fulfil the popular expectation and to destroy it, while at the same time spiritualising it. Luke guaranteed that, with the help he would give him, Jesus could endure the sufferings of the crucifixion. Nicodemus would do his best to arrange everything in the Sanhedrin so that the judgment and the removal from the cross would follow one another closely; the crucified would remain only for a short time fastened to the cross. The discussion had reached this point when Jesus suddenly dashed into the cave, pursued by hired assassins who were trying to kill him. It was important for him to escape death at their hands before the great scene.

In the end they are successful. Matters move quickly. The condemnation is pronounced. Jesus, crucified, has just died, uttering a great cry. Joseph of Arimathea carries the body into the tomb. There Luke has prepared heroic remedies; Jesus is restored to his feet; the stone is thrown down; the guard flees. Then follow the successive appearances before the disciples and finally the separation on the Mount of Olives. Jesus retires to his mother's house and henceforth ceases to mingle in public life; but until his death he presides, invisibly and from afar, over the life of the community.

In the case of Venturini we are dealing with a far more interesting, devout, and honest mind. Venturini died in poverty after a hard life. His *Life of Jesus* has been re-issued almost every year since his death, which shows how much it is still read. We shall only consider it in connection with one special point: the relation between Jesus and the Essenes. Venturini has no doubt of the influence of this order on Jesus; he dates it from the stay of the holy family in Egypt. From this time on, the Essenes, with the help of his cousin John, watched over the education of Christ to prepare him for his task as the Redeemer. Venturini, however, has nothing to do with the bizarre and un-

pleasant conception of Bahrdt, who makes it all a sordid comedy. He sees in the attempt of the Essenes something far more serious. According to him, Jesus shares the intention of the heads of the order to educate the popular conscience; he even goes beyond them and undertakes personally to turn people's minds from their earthly and vulgar faith in a Messiah, by becoming something else and giving himself for something else. For a moment he seems to succeed, at the time of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem; but the people turn against him and the condemnation follows quickly. Jesus goes to his death, believing himself that he is really dying. It is only later, after the descent from the cross, that Joseph of Arimathea, observing the blood on the wounds, conceives the hope that Christ is still living. He then goes in haste for the members of the order; one of them arrives in white raiment: this is the angel who frightened the guards. All together they decide to watch over the body. For twenty-four hours nothing happens. Towards morning, however, the brother on guard hears a noise; it is Jesus rising. Then the whole order bestirs itself and they carry him to the house of the society. Two brothers remain at the tomb; these are the two angels whom the women saw. Then Jesus shows himself to his followers for forty days, after which his strength is exhausted.

Here we have a summary of the two lives of Jesus upon which are founded the affirmations of those who maintain that Jesus was an Essene, or was influenced from his childhood by the Essenian ideas. One can see how flimsy the basis is. Bahrdt and Venturini themselves proceed in this matter by assertions. They give no legitimate foundation for their claims. They limit themselves to making statements. At this rate we can imagine anything we wish; nothing is easier.

A few very superficial resemblances between the teaching of Jesus and that of the Essenes, such, for example, as the refusal to take oaths, are not sufficient to establish this connection on any firm basis. Jesus cannot be called an Essene merely because, like the Essenes, he gathered about

him a circle of disciples, or because he counselled his followers not to take money, or to have two tunics.[11] It must be remembered that Essenism was a sort of monachism that fled the world and avoided all contact with it; there was something sectarian about it, something that denied reality. This, indeed, was its essential character. But Jesus desires to act upon the world; he does not wish his disciples to withdraw from it but to change it. One of the precepts of the Essenes is the following: "Whoever meets his own brother, if the latter is not a member of the order or even a novice, must take a bath of purification; for, by this contact alone, he has become impure." What has this in common with the spirit of Jesus and the parable of the Good Samaritan? Jesus breathes the joy of action; the Essenes retired into the solitudes, sheltering themselves from the world. Finally, the order of the Essenes was a sacramentarian community; the essential thing for its members was the sacred acts celebrated in common, the vows, the purifications, the sacred feasts. Jesus, on the contrary, directs his activity towards that which is spiritual and personal. Even when he celebrated the Last Supper it is doubtful if he had any intention of inaugurating a sacrament; this seems improbable. In any case, he had no desire to found a community of monks.

There is then, we may conclude, only a superficial resemblance between Essenism and Jesus, and nothing that might lead us to suppose that there was any deep connection between this movement and the person of Christ. It is entirely possible that, as a child, Jesus may have heard the Essenes spoken of and that his mind may have lingered over some of their customs and a few of their practices. But to imagine that his education was controlled by the

[11] Cf. Stapfer, *Jésus-Christ, sa personne, son autorité, son œucre*, III, p. 185. Id., *La Palestine au temps de Jésus-Christ*, ch. XIV.

Essenes or even that any individual Essene exercised any influence over his early years is a purely gratuitous supposition the improbability of which becomes striking on a careful reading of the gospels.

§ 2. JESUS IN THE TEMPLE AT THE AGE OF TWELVE

One single detail of the childhood of Jesus is known to us. It is that related in the gospel of Luke ii, 41-52: the scene of the Temple. It has been preserved by only one of the evangelists. On the other hand, this scene is so much in accord with the modern findings of psychology, it is so readily explicable at just this period in the life of Christ, it so perfectly places his personality at this moment of his psychological development, and it harmonises so exactly with the subsequent events of this development that it would be unwise to suspect its authenticity.

Jesus was twelve years old. In the Oriental countries this age corresponds to a more advanced period of physical development than with us. It is about the age of puberty, when the child becomes or is about to become an adult. It is the period of physical and psychic disturbances, the springtime of the soul, what the English call the *storm and stress period*. With us, this age is marked, from the religious point of view, by the catechism; it is the time when children are given their religious instruction. The Church was led by a very sure psychological instinct in choosing this moment when life is at the crossroads for the essential decisions concerning herself. She obeyed the same instinct which, among the savage peoples, summons to the initiation the young who are about to become men and administers to them the vows in the initiatory rites. Among the Jews, the recitation of the *Schema*, the prayer which every man must repeat morning and evening, became obligatory at

the age of twelve. The young man was thus in a sense admitted to the religious community of the men; he took his place in the number of those who counted. "He had to observe the Torah; he was given the name of Bâr Mitsvah. He was taken to the Temple for the festivals, and he began to fast regularly, in particular on the great day of the feast of Atonement." [12]

Now we know to-day, through the investigations of psychology, that this age, which varies with race and climate, in which the most important and the most trying physiological changes take place, is also the moment of parallel and capital psychic transformations. The child is on the point of becoming a man; and this does not take place without crises. The studies in religious psychology of Starbuck, Wm. James, J. Leuba, G. Coe have shown us that these psychic crises manifest themselves very clearly in the religious life and that the age of puberty is also, roughly speaking, in the great majority of cases, the age of *conversion*. We shall take up this point later, in connection with Jesus. For the moment, let us merely remember the fact.

It is quite natural, from what we have already said, that Jesus, having reached the age of twelve, should have made the journey to Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary. We can easily imagine what this project and its approaching realisation, glimpsed through the mists of the future, must have meant to him. To see the Temple was to know at last the mystery which remains veiled from the eyes of children; it was to approach a revelation similar to that to which devout young Protestants look in their religious instruction. Up to this moment Jesus can have caught but vague glimpses of the problems that arise slowly before the human soul. He had probably lived by intuition rather than by

[12] STAPFER, *La Palestine au temps de Jésus-Christ*, pp. 142-144.

solutions, as happens at this age. It does not appear that he had experienced any of those violent conflicts which often indelibly stamp the souls of children and cause disastrous repressions. In these simple surroundings, life, developing without shocks, presented fewer contradictions than in our great cities of to-day. Family duty and social duty were, so to speak, more natural than they are in the bosom of our complicated civilisations in which the instincts are brutally struck down by the exigencies of a hurried and conventional life. Besides, there was undoubtedly in the soul of this child a harmony which we rarely know. We shall say later what makes us think this.

"The pilgrimage," writes Renan, "was for the Jews of the provinces a ceremony full of sweetness. Entire series of psalms were consecrated to the singing of the happiness of families journeying thus for several days in the springtime, over the hills and the valleys, having always before them the splendours of Jerusalem, the terrors of the sacred parvis, the joy of brothers dwelling together.[13] The road that Jesus usually followed on these journeys was that which one follows to-day through Jenin and Shechem. From Shechem to Jerusalem it is very difficult. But the approach to the old sanctuaries of Shiloh and Bethel, close to which we pass, keeps our souls on the watch. Ain-el-Haramie, the last stop, is a melancholy and charming spot, and few impressions equal that which we experience when we make camp there in the evening. The valley is narrow and sombre; a black stream flows from the rocks, pierced with tombs, which form its sides. It is, I believe, the 'Valley of Tears,' whose trickling waters, sung as one of the stations of the road in the delicious Psalm LXXXIV, became for the sweet, sad mysticism of the Middle Ages

[13] See especially Psalms lxxxiv, cxxii, cxxxiii (Vulgate, lxxxiii, cxxi, cxxxii).

the emblem of life. Early the next morning one will be at Jerusalem; even to-day this expectation cheers the caravan, rendering the night short and sleep light." [14]

We can easily imagine this more or less nomadic life which the people adopted as they set off in their caravans. We see that many-coloured Oriental crowd, invading the streets and the squares of the capital: a swarm of asses, men, women, and children that filled every spot. They went into the Temple; they came out again; they crossed one another's paths in all directions. Our regular and comfortable life knows nothing of such carelessness and such disorder. The meal hours, which bring the family back to a fixed spot, did not exist for these Oriental children; they were entirely given over to their passion for seeing and hearing. It was thus undoubtedly that Jesus stepped through the doors of the Temple and approached the doctors and the scribes. He listened, he observed; his heart was filled with that indefinable charm of dreams that are at last realised. He heard them speaking of those things of which, without his knowing it, his soul had always been full. He went away and came back; and the hours passed and even the days without his being aware of them. Life like this was good. His parents were not disturbed, so natural it was, so much almost a matter of course, that a child should live as he liked during the festival. It was only when they had set out for home and after they had inquired among their relatives and friends, that Joseph and Mary began to be anxious and retraced their steps. They found him in the Temple, seated in the midst of the doctors, listening to them and questioning them. Then to their reproaches Jesus answers: "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" [15]

[14] RENAN, op. cit., pp. 71-72.
[15] Luke ii, 49.

A reply at once full of assurance and surprise! For the first time, Jesus is aware of a difference between his own experience and that of his parents. He is astonished that *they do not know,* when he is completely occupied with *the one thing necessary.* What is more, he affirms, as the simplest fact in the world, the urgency of his duty, to be about his Father's business. Whence does this entirely natural appellation "My Father" come to him? Where has he found it? How is it possible for him to use it with such perfect simplicity in replying to his own parents? We have here evidently the spontaneous, direct testimony of a new experience, one which, for him, surpasses all others, an experience which he believes is common to all . . . and behold, his parents do not know of it! He perceives that they are ignorant, or that they appear to be ignorant, of what is now for him the centre of life: his Father's business, that which relates to his Father, to the God who speaks in him.

Every candid child has had similar surprises, every child, at least, who, about to become a man, has looked at the world with a frank soul, a soul directed by God. But with us they are quickly effaced by our participation in the common insincerity which places the cares of the outer world before the inner truth. People persuade us—and we are easily persuaded—that we are foolish to have believed in the primacy of the conscience and the sovereignty of absolute truth; and it is then that we begin to waver between serious morality and distraction.

With Jesus, nothing of this kind occurs. His testimony to the truth which he has seized inwardly is complete and absolute. He suffers from no division of mind. Hence his astonishment that others, especially his parents, do not know what he knows.

But what does he know? That he must be about his

Father's business, that this is the first, the urgent duty which takes precedence over all the rest.—And for how long has he known this? Just for a moment, no doubt. He has always felt it, but he has felt it only obscurely. Now he *knows* it, and it is this which is new.

We spoke a moment ago of the age of Jesus and the age of conversions. Is there not a connection between what has just taken place in his soul and the facts of conversion as they have been studied by the psychologists? Certainly, and to make it clear let us recall briefly what, from the psychological point of view, conversion is.

If we consider the consciousness as a sort of constant current of concepts, ideas, images, volitions, etc., accompanied by their affective coefficients, conversion, every conversion, whether to religion or to atheism, is constituted psychically by the fixation of the person's focus of energy upon a certain group of associated ideas, images, etc., which become decisively preponderant and marked. If it is religious ideas which become the centre, the conversion will be a religious conversion. That is the schema of the process of conversion. For conversion to take place, then, one field of consciousness must be substituted for another, through the sudden variation of the person's focus of energy, or, if you will, of his *interest*. In reality, however, the process is less schematic than this and is complicated by all sorts of secondary circumstances.

If now, altering a little the position of our glass, we change our angle of vision and look at conversion from the point of view of psycho-analysis and the observations it has given us on the human personality, we find approximately the following: at the base of human life there is a sort of cluster of instinctive energies (the *libido*) which rise in the being with a variable force. These instinctive impulses are most frequently repressed during childhood

by social, pedagogical, and moral restrictions. But they tend to re-emerge, producing destructive effects if they are prevented from doing so; if they are not prevented, they come forth, the occasion and the conditions being given them, and are transformed, sublimated into noble and lofty aspirations; they cease to be merely instinctive and become morally and socially utilisable. From this point of view, conversion is a sublimation of the inferior forces of the being into superior forces, a sudden or slow passage of the vital force from an instinctive level to a reflective level. The being then realises the possibilities of its life along religious lines and rises from the sphere of instinctive desires to that of the effective realisation of the personality in divine love.

I shall not dwell upon this schema, although it might be carried much further. But may we not suppose that something of the kind took place in Jesus at this time? Yes, but *mutatis mutandis*. We might say that there took place in his life something equivalent to what would be a conversion in our own, but that it was not a conversion in the generally accepted meaning of the term.

Let us attempt, then, to understand the relation established between what took place in Jesus in the Temple and what, in the religious world, we call a conversion. Let us see at the same time how and why the two things differ; in what respects Jesus, being a man, underwent, in his spiritual development, an evolution analogous to that which every man worthy of the name must undergo; and how the circumstances, the details, the psychic processes of this transformation differed from those which we observe in ourselves.

If we combine the contributions of religious psychology and those of psycho-analysis in regard to conversion, we find ourselves in a position to form a fairly exact idea

of the great psychic transformation which takes place in the adolescent at the moment when he enters manhood. We know that at this eminently critical hour of his development, a complete readaptation of the forces of life to the environment must take place. The child is no longer a child, that is to say, the infantile life, characterised by a scattering of interests, comes to an end. Up to this time, the child has allowed his interest to wander over all objects and attach itself to any and every idea in a confused fluttering. James has compared the variations of the emotive tension in such a divided and hesitating personality to the sparks which run hither and thither over a scrap of burning paper. The comparison may be applied to the soul of the child. With him the *libido,* the *élan vital,* projects itself successively and without discernment upon all the objects that attract his attention.

Now, to become a man, to form one's personality, to pass into the adult state, is, from the psychical point of view, to become a unit. At the age of which we are speaking, the life-impulse becomes very strong; the instinctive forces spring up with great power; and, at the same time, they are obliged to adapt themselves to the surrounding reality. The young man finds himself faced with this task of harmonising his personality with the life which he must live.

At the moment when this violent movement takes place the subconscious forces that spring up in us are of a very diverse nature. We are confronted with instincts that may be avowed and others that have already been repressed by the censor. The cluster of our *libido* is composite and multiple. It does not adapt itself as it is to the life which we must live. We sometimes feel with anguish that there are impulses within us which cannot come out as they are, which must be sublimated in order to become utilisable.

And the more a young man feels at this moment the necessity of this sublimation, the more he is attracted to the religious life and to conversion. The crisis becomes imminent which will make all his energies converge to elevate his vital level.

But this psychic process always presents itself under the form of a *crisis* because in us it early meets with numberless repressions with which it must reckon. In the course of our childhood we have not candidly submitted ourselves to the inner urge of our instincts. Nor have we accepted candidly the obstacles that society or the family has opposed to them. There has been a disruption within us between a will to good and a will to evil; we have at times, in one way or another, confirmed in our hearts the censor that is opposed to us, even while persevering in the instinct that pleased us. We have already felt ourselves to be double; there has been an opposition within us between the man of the flesh and the man of the spirit. And when the moment comes to make a unity in us, there is a terrible duality to surmount. The inner life-urge cannot be accepted just as it is. In order that we may become children of the Father and worthy of the human task, in order that sublimation may take place in us, a crisis becomes necessary in which the whole being turns back upon itself. This is what we call a conversion.

But we can imagine this accession to the plenitude of the human task taking place in another fashion. We can imagine a man in whom, from childhood, life has been so spontaneous, and the accord between the inner vital urge and the external exigencies so complete, the adhesion so unanimous to all the demands, all the postulates of life, that there is no *duplicity* in him, that instead of a duality he contains a harmony. Imagine this child reaching the age of manhood; the new adaptation that such a trans-

formation demands, the accession to personal responsibilities, the necessity of choosing for oneself the direction of one's life and the handling of one's human tasks, these things would require no crisis, but simply an unfolding. And this indeed is what seems to have taken place in Jesus. To speak our modern language, the scene in the Temple signifies that his whole life-urge had been placed at the service of the highest task, and this as a perfectly natural thing, as a matter of course. Jesus has no need to be *converted* in order to adapt himself to the highest life, that is to set about his Father's business. He does this naturally and is astonished that his parents are not aware of it. This seems to be the unique case in which, when the moment has come, that is to say at the time of adolescence, a *libido* has sublimated itself entirely into religious forces and placed itself at the service of the Father. The love of God, in its holiest and most lofty form, absorbs the whole force of life which exists in Christ. With him at this moment there is no crisis at all. The crisis will occur later when the time comes for him to realise in a human and sinful environment the attitude towards life which he has assumed here. It is the scene of the Temptation which shows us a crisis in the life of Jesus, not that of the Temple; while with us, there is a crisis not only when we seek to realise our duty in a practical way and translate it into deeds, but before this time as well, at the moment when we seek to make the attitude of duty the true attitude of our life, the moment when we perceive, often with terror, always with a partial revolt, that we must be about our Father's business.

While the scene in the Temple occupies, then, in the life of Jesus, the same place that conversion occupies in our own life, the correspondence is not complete; and by this very fact it reveals to us a difference between our

lives and his, not in their essential psychic nature, but in respect of the spiritual mystery which lies at the base of every personality. Conscious of this mysterious superiority of Christ, men in all ages have attempted to explain it metaphysically. In this we shall follow neither the theologians nor the councils.

CHAPTER III

BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

§ 1. THE BAPTISM

After the scene in the Temple, nothing is known about Jesus for a considerable period, fifteen or sixteen years. The gospels are mute regarding this whole epoch in the life of Christ, and we are reduced to conjectures about it. Ah! if only the discovery of some new manuscript might throw light for us one of these days upon this silent and secluded development. This is improbable, but it is always possible. There remains to us only the resource of picturing to ourselves the sweetness and the harmony of these years, of this lingering youth, passed partly in the labours of the paternal workshop, partly in solitary meditation. What labour, illumined by the simple joy of a simple life! And what meditations!

It was during this time undoubtedly that the subconsciousness of Jesus amassed that ample provision of scenes from life which were to emerge later in the form of the wonderful parables that have come down to us like oases of freshness and grace in the desert of the days. He continued to watch, to observe, without any mental reservations, to contemplate life. He thought of the future, certainly, but not with the anguish and the eager anxiety that the great men of coming times were to know only too well. In the peace of his clear soul, the immense possibilities of life awaited the occasion which, in due time, the Father would certainly present to him. Jesus had not yet made any plans. He simply felt growing within him that effluvium

of divine life which makes the heart tremble with joy. He felt himself borne forward by the force within him of the good news come from Heaven to man. He desired what the Father desired, and he was happy in it. Heretofore this will had not defined itself clearly outside the sphere of simple everyday duties. Jesus, however, was listening. A sort of solemn expectation must have hovered over his life and greeted all his mornings.

It was then that there resounded even as far as Nazareth the fame of the strange prophet who was baptising on the banks of the Jordan, in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida and Ænon. Hardly older than Jesus himself, almost his contemporary and therefore in the full flower of his youth, he astonished the people of Jerusalem and Judæa by his preaching. It was like the blast of a trumpet suddenly awakening the sleeping consciences of the people of God. He spoke as the ancient prophets had spoken, but more forcibly and directly than they. He announced a new era, for which the time had come to prepare. He said, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees" and he maintained that of the very stones of the road God could make children of Abraham. Here at last was a true spiritual message, different from that of the scribes and the Pharisees, and which directly echoed the experiences of life which Jesus had for so long felt welling up within him. It was like a herald's note announcing that Christ was awaiting the occasion to come forth from the Nazarene shadows and go wherever God should send him.

With the others, like the others, Jesus felt himself drawn. He must go down there, and watch, and listen. They were too beautiful, those tidings of the crowds who came to be baptised, confessing their sins. It was the beginning of the light, the complete radiance of which Jesus felt in himself, the beginning of the irradiation of the enlightened for the

sake of the rest. Jesus betook himself to the Jordan; he walked to the desert solitudes that border on the Dead Sea. he made his way to where John the Baptist was. He approached. . . . Ah! how we should like to have seen him at the moment when he arrived there, perhaps during one of the apostrophes of the Baptist. With what eyes did he look upon the inspired hermit! What feelings of joy and solemn sanctity passed at that moment through his soul!

At this point the gospels break their silence to describe for us in a few lines the Baptism of Jesus. Nothing about the thoughts that must have passed through his mind. Only the fact; but how eloquent in its simplicity! It is the act of social and moral solidarity, with everything which this implies in the way of renunciation and humiliation. Mingling with the crowd of sinners who have need of repentance and pardon (and how great a need!) he who feels that his soul is pure and his conscience spotless advances. He is but one with the others; he wishes to be but one with them. Little matter the consequences that are to result from this and the obstacles that are to be spread in his way! Jesus feels that this is to "fulfil all righteousness." [1] *Righteousness,* in the eyes of such backsliders as ourselves, consists in assigning to each his proper value, not confounding our own innocence with the sin of our neighbour. For Jesus, who has developed all of a piece, who has allowed Life to work its will in him, who finds in the very urge of his deepest instincts the Father and the will of the Father, there is a higher righteousness than that of distinctions, the righteousness of a deliberately chosen solidarity with all his brothers.[2] He wants to be baptised with the sinners; he asks to be included with all the others. His purity does not separate him from the circle of the sin-

[1] Matthew iii, 15.
[2] Cf. in connection with this the conception of *justice* in Isaiah xxv.

ners, but rather leads him into it; and the more he feels himself to be the son of God, the more he desires to be the son of man.

In response to this voluntary humiliation, this accepted solidarity, there comes, as always happens, a higher revelation that is like an inward thrill in which throb all the divine forces of life. The gospel describes this inner palpitation by means of two symbols: a *dove* and a *voice*.

There is undoubtedly something here for psycho-analysis to investigate. It appears, in the first place, that these phenomena were entirely personal. According to the two gospels of Mark and Matthew [3] it is Jesus who sees the dove descending upon him. Luke is a little less explicit.[4] John, later, tells us that it was the Baptist who had this vision, and that it was addressed to him.[5] As for the voice, Matthew does not tell us who heard it; but Mark and Luke made it an interpellation directly addressed to Jesus: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Finally, Mark, Matthew and Luke, all three, speak of the *heavens opened* or *rent asunder* before the eyes of Jesus.

What interests us here is the psychic event that took place; and this is clear. It is a feeling of perfect communion with the Spirit of God, a sudden illumination, the profound and henceforth inalienable certitude of being in a filial relation to the Father which confers a special mission upon him.

The scene of the Baptism, according to all the theologians, marks the commencement of the public life of Jesus. It is a consecration to the new tasks, the beginning of a vocation. Jesus takes his life in his hands and consecrates it to a practical mission. Psychically speaking, we are witnessing here the movement of introversion, of a return upon

[3] Matt. iii, 16 and Mark i, 10.
[4] Luke iii, 22.
[5] John i, 32.

the self which, in every great consecrated life, precedes the productive extraversion, the practical activity in the outer world.

Now the psycho-analysts have made a close study of this introversion, this psychic movement of a return into the self and the inevitable symbolism with which it is surrounded and which is found virtually everywhere, in mysticism, in the myths, fairy-tales and legends, in alchemy, in free-masonry and Rosicrucianism, in all the movements in which the mystic life plays a part. They have remarked with Silberer,[6] and more recently with Jung,[7] the double bearing of these symbols which, from being *material*, gradually become *functional*. Understood first in a material sense, they attach themselves to the past life, to some event in the past life of the person or the people that uses them. They call up an image of the past. Then gradually they take on a *prospective* meaning, if one may so call it, an annunciative meaning, an *enlarged* significance; they call up something higher, more noble and more elevated.

In this way the symbol of the *murder of the father*, for example, which is primitively connected with the feelings of hatred which the child bears to its father, comes to signify, in the individual, *renunciation*, the sacrifice of these hateful tendencies in the name of a general love for one's neighbour. The *desire for the mother*—the sexual desire for the mother, the return to her, the tendency towards her and finally incest—may, in dreams, for instance, come to symbolise the spiritual *new birth*.

Let us apply these remarks to the three symbols which we find in the account of the Baptism: the *dove*, the *open* or *cloven* skies, the voice affirming *Christ's filial relationship* with the Father.

[6] SILBERER, *Probleme der Mystik und Ihrer Symbolik*.
[7] JUNG, *Die Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse*.—See also above, Introd. p. 45.

It is not surprising, in the first place, that Jesus, in the profound emotion of baptism, should have seen a dove appear before his eyes, that he should have pictured to himself what was happening to him inwardly under the image of a dove. We are told that among the Jews the dove symbolised purity, innocence, and sometimes the Holy Ghost. I do not know whether this symbol was already popularly accepted at that time, as it has since become, thanks to the many Christian monuments in which the dove represents the Holy Ghost.[8] More constant, on the other hand, is the fact that doves or pigeons have always represented love, the union of love.[9] Of this we have all sorts of evidences. Who does not know La Fontaine's fable of the two doves who loved one another tenderly? Now, the mystic union, the *unio mystica*, has always been thought of as a marital union, as a *spiritual wedding* (to quote the phrase of Ruysbroek). One has only to recall those nuns who, in the ages of fervour, became brides of Christ and received from him the wedding-ring: Saint Catherine, Marguerite-Marie

[8] We find doves in the paintings of the catacombs. They often figure in the decorations or the windows of churches, in the centre of the triangle that represents the Trinity. Finally, in our own day, they still ornament the Huguenot crosses that Protestants wear about their throats in place of the Sacred Heart worn by Catholics.

[9] We read in Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites,* Edinburgh, Black, 1889, p. 275: "*The dove,* which the Semites would neither eat nor touch, was sacrificed by the Romans to Venus (Propertius, iv, 5, 62); and as the Roman Venus-worship of later times was largely derived from the Phœnician sanctuary of Eryx, where the dove had peculiar honour as the companion of Astarte (Ælian, *Nat. An.,* iv, 2), it is very possible that this was a Semitic rite, though I have not found any conclusive evidence that it was so. It must certainly have been a very rare sacrifice; for the dove among the Semites had a quite peculiar sanctity, and Al-Nadim says expressly that it was not sacrificed by the Harranians (*Fihrist,* p. 319, 1, 21). It was, however, offered by the Hebrews, in sacrifices which we shall by and by see reason to regard as closely analogous to mystical rites; and in Juvenal vi, 459 et seqq., the superstitious matrons of Rome are represented as calling in an Armenian or Syrian (Commagenian) haruspex to perform the sacrifice of a dove, a chicken, a dog, or even a child. In this association an exceptional and mystic sacrifice is necessarily implied."

Alacoque, Saint Theresa, and how many others! The associations of ideas called up in the soul by the concept of a spiritual union are, quite naturally, those that relate to the carnal union. If the dove evokes symbolically the union of love there is nothing surprising in the fact that it should have risen from the depths of Christ's subconscious at this hour in which he was experiencing the spiritual union with God.

But there is no need to dwell here upon the causal roots of this symbol. It is much more important to consider it in its teleological sense. If we look towards the future, towards what it signifies for the future of Christ, if we contemplate it with reference, as it were, to the prophetic line which it announces, it assumes a much wider significance. It symbolises what the life of Jesus is going to be: an ever closer and deeper union, no longer with that which belongs to the earth, but with that which is highest in life, with that Father who draws him to himself, who desires him, who calls him to an unknown destiny. It is, as I have said, the consecration to a mission, the form of which is still unknown to him but which he already desires in his spirit. He will allow himself to be seized and drawn along by those personal energies which are in him and which are to lead him where they will. He will obey the inner impulse which he felt at the age of twelve in the Temple but the jealous exclusiveness of which he has never realised fully until now. He will belong utterly to Him who speaks within him, even if he must be in opposition to those about him who profess to speak in the name of God. This means, at bottom, a complete self-abandonment, an exclusive union with a personal God, the God of the conscience, whatever the consequences may be.

The *open or rent skies* (σχιζομένους): this expression makes us think of Hodler's picture of William Tell. The

hero is outlined in his rough simplicity against a sky background of half-open clouds. The psycho-analysts have seen in the forms of these clouds opening into the sky that of the female organs. The open sky is nothing else than the maternal womb from which the hero has sprung. Here we have the material side of the symbol; it carries us back to the mystery of origins. But if we turn towards the future the open sky means something else as well: the assured communion with the Beyond, grace manifesting itself by an open passage from heaven to earth, the suppression of the obstacle, the glass wall, that continually separates us from the divinity.[10] Henceforth, there is no cause for fear; the life of the Christ is assured of constant inspiration. Now that the Holy Ghost is within him, has come upon him, it will be the same with him always.

Finally the *voice*. It says: "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." What does it matter whether there was really a voice or not! It is the certitude only that counts, the certitude of the fact which this voice expresses. The voice is, in this sense, the symbol of a new state of the soul, that of a unique and special sonship. At twelve, in the Temple, Jesus already felt this sonship; but now it is something more; he feels that he is the object of the Father's whole affection. The experience is, in a way, the same, but it is more palpable; it has increased tenfold in intensity and brought with it a corresponding certitude. If we wished to translate this religious experience into psychological terms we might say that Jesus, at the moment of his voluntary abasement in the baptismal solidarity, realises the perfect harmony of all the psychic energies that are at work within him. The *élan vital* which he feels animating him encounters no obstacle. The act which he has just

[10] The *dream of the ladder* at the beginning of the career of Jacob presents similar psychological features (Cf. Gen. xxviii, 10-22).

performed liberates the creative energies within him. There is no repression whatever. Everything flows in the direction in which it ought to flow. There is no opposition between father and son, as is usually the case with us (and this is why our conscience seems to us a yoke and a hindrance). The Father loves the Son; all his affection is in him. Jesus feels, at the same time, fully himself and animated by a force, an energy, a personal dynamic which are greater than himself and yet a part of him, as a loving father is part of a beloved son. How translate this impression otherwise than by a voice, a word of affirmation? This is the only adequate symbol. It is connected with the impressions of the past; from childhood it is by voices and words that the affections are affirmed which come to us. The symbol is borrowed from the past, but it projects its light into the future; it assumes also a prophetic aspect. It signifies the guaranty of the success of his life, the conservation of those values of which Christ is aware. It is the seal affixed to the work, whatever it may be, which he is to undertake.

Then Jesus moves away, silent and alone, into the desert.

§ 2. THE TEMPTATION

After the Baptism, the Temptation. This will arrest us a little longer. The three synoptic gospels refer to it, Mark very briefly, the two others in more detail. John does not speak of it at all.

In all times the theologians have found something problematical in the story of the Temptation. It does indeed present a problem. First of all, its nature is such that it would have to have been related after the event by Jesus himself. No one was present at the Temptation, since Jesus, led by the Spirit, as the text says, went into the desert alone. It is therefore an instance of an entirely private

experience and thus not a historical fact but a psychic fact, to be approached by the methods of psychology and not by those of history. This has always embarrassed the theologians who, caught in the net of historical methods, feel for them a sort of veneration that borders on superstition and rise with difficulty to a psychological conception of events.

Many examples might be given of the stupidities that have been uttered on this subject. Strauss, for example, faithful to his mythical theory, tried to see in the Temptation a legend of primitive Christianity, woven out of motives supplied by the Old Testament.

Venturini, with his somewhat romantic imagination, has the rôle of the devil played by a Pharisee who has come to tempt Jesus. This is amusing enough, but not very charitable.

Bruno Bauer sees in the Temptation an account, not of the experiences of Jesus, but of those of the primitive Christian community. It was the latter that felt the temptations presented to us as those of Jesus, and it projected them backward into the person of the Lord himself. This, we must admit, is an interesting idea. Although nothing authorises us to believe that the matter came about in any such fashion, Bauer must at least have the credit of perceiving that we are concerned here with a human experience which is repeated, *mutatis mutandis,* in every Christian soul. He has thus set up a bridge between Jesus and ourselves, instead of enlarging, as so many others have done, the abyss that separates the Messiah from simple mortals.

As for Renan, who is more hasty and refuses to be greatly embarrassed by anything that stands in his way, he passes lightly over the Temptation. Observe how he treats it. "Until the arrest of John," he says, "which took place approximately in the summer of the year 29, Jesus did not

leave the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. A sojourn in the desert of Judea was generally considered [11] as a preparation for great things, as a sort of 'retreat' before a public career. Jesus followed the example of his forerunners in this and passed forty days with no other company than the wild beasts, practising a rigorous fast. The imagination of his disciples was greatly exercised over this sojourn. In popular belief the desert was the abode of devils. There exist in the world few regions more desolate, more abandoned by God, more shut off from life than the stony slope which forms the western border of the Dead Sea. It was believed that he had passed through terrible ordeals during the time he had spent in that fearful country, that Satan had frightened him with his chimeras or flattered him with seductive promises, and that afterwards, to reward him for his victory, the angels had ministered to him." [12]

Presto! . . . Renan attaches no more importance than this to the Temptation. He does not even see that people do not invent a psychic process of this extent, or that, if it had been invented, it would constitute none the less a prodigy and a model of psychological truth. I have myself searched in vain for any reason to attribute this adventure to the disciples rather than to Jesus; nor do the theologians offer us any good reasons for doing so. On the contrary, examined closely, the gospel narrative of this episode of the inner life of Christ seems to me to accord admirably with the moral and psychological situation that was his at this moment and to harmonise with our idea of the ordeal which the utilisation of his gifts among men constitutes for every genius.

Jesus, we remember, had just passed through the su-

[11] This "generally considered" is a pearl.
[12] RENAN, op. cit., p. 117.

premely beautiful and exalting experience related in the episode of the Baptism. The time had come for him to translate into living works the magnificent life-urge with which he felt himself flooded. Now in such an environment as his, the natural expression of the religious genius lay along the extended lines of *messianism*. His education, as we have seen, had familiarised him, through his reading and understanding of the Scriptures and particularly of the Jewish Apocalypses and the prophets, with the traditional figure of the Messiah. On the other hand, the very character of his inner life, the central experience of his soul, must have led him to accept certain features of this figure while rendering others repugnant to him. Finally, the originality and the sovereignty of the inner experiences through which he had passed must have urged him invincibly to manifest outwardly the life that was expanding so abundantly within him. He had to act: this fact he had already solemnly accepted in the Temple when he was twelve years old. Now the hour for practical action had struck; the appearance of the Baptist had made him conscious of this call. The time had come for him to begin.

But how? That was the agonising, momentous, alarming, disquieting question upon which depended the salvation of a whole people. He is to be the Messiah, or something approximating to that; he is to come in the name of Him who sends him. But how is he to do it? Under what banner and bearing what colours? How is he to reach men in such a way as to act upon them, to communicate to them this Father whom he knows, to save them, without compromising what gives value to his life and all the experiences of his life?

The crisis awaits him here. Nothing of this sort had presented itself to him when the question had been simply of the direction he was to give to his own life. It arises

at the precise moment when this life encounters sinful humanity with the purpose of manifesting itself to it. In this lies the meaning of the Temptation. It is, at bottom, the temptation which all of us, or almost all of us, have to *miss* our own life, to lose it in paths where it will not give us what it should and can give us. We do not have this temptation as messiahs, we have it as men, in the sense and according to the line of our various vocations; but this does not alter the psychological process. Psychologically, we might call Christ's Temptation the *temptation of introversion*. Perhaps it does not present itself to extraverted temperaments, to those in whom every feeling flows outwards, to objects, things and persons; but when a man begins to meditate, reflect, pore over the mystery of his destiny, to think it before living it, he is on the brink of this temptation; and it is only by surmounting it that he can become a living soul.

Now it so happens that the psycho-analysts, as we have already remarked, have been much occupied of late with the study of introversion. In the light of what they have told us about it we can take up the account of the Temptation with some profit and grasp, as I believe, its immense import, at once in the life of Jesus and with respect to our own lives.

It is not very easy, all things considered, to define exactly what introversion is. Many people, hearing this word and constantly encountering it on the pens of the psycho-analysts, seize their heads in their hands and conjure us to explain to them what it means. Let us attempt to do so now, better at least than we have done it thus far.

Jung gives us the best account of it in his two most recent books, *Die Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse* and *Psychologische Typen*. He does so indirectly, however, for it must be admitted that these concepts employed by

psycho-analysis are too charged with life to be easily defined; we must be able to feel them rather than to understand them, to grasp their essentially biological meaning intuitively rather than intellectually. But Jung points out that men in general, in their reaction to life, present two psychological types, in one of which the essential and principal function resides in *feeling*, while the fundamental tonality of the other is constituted by *thought*. The one unites himself with the object through feeling, the other thinks first and foremost. Among men, the former are apt to be led by their psychic nature to feel very strongly everything that surrounds them; this is their first, spontaneous tendency; it is only later, after they have acted, that they reflect upon what they have felt, and even then they reflect very little and feebly. Thought, in them, plays only a secondary part. Jung calls these the *extraverts*, that is to say, those who turn towards the outward world, whose feeling expresses itself entirely in external action. The others, on the contrary, draw back before the object, before the external world; they are led rather to think about what surrounds them, to reflect upon the external and internal events of their lives. They do not lay hold precipitately upon the external world through an impulse of feeling; rather it is thought which is developed in them. These are the *introverts*.

In reality, these psychological types are not divided in any such absolute fashion as our description might lead one to imagine. The introvert, for example, is not devoid of all feeling; he is not all thought; he may be affectionate and sympathetic and may display emotion. But if we observe his feelings we see that in general they lack personal originality; they have no individual stamp; they are the conventional feelings which one is supposed to have. The introvert will have for every one the same friendliness, the

same sympathy, while the extravert will have a gamut of feelings that are finely shaded and that vary with their objects. Similarly, the extravert will not be all feeling; in him too we shall find thought; he may even succeed in thinking very clearly, even very scientifically. If we examine them closely, however, we find that his thoughts exist in him, so to speak, as a foreign element, as so many conventional formulas which he has learned and retained by rote. They lack the original, individual touch; they are colourless and pale, just as are the feelings of the other type, the introverted type.

When these two types are blended, they complement one another admirably. The union of two beings of these different types makes a good marriage. But actually every single individual inclines more or less to the side of introversion or to the side of extraversion; and the inner conflict which upsets the equilibrium of our lives always springs from this opposition between the principal and strongly developed function that dominates in us and the secondary function which is scarcely or not at all differentiated and which remains, most of the time, shut up in the subconscious. The conflict of the introvert, for example, always springs from a want of equilibrium between his strongly developed thought, acting consciously, and the feelings, still in a larval and undifferentiated state, that stir in his subconscious. Here is the danger which menaces men of this type.

Now, as Jung does not fail to point out also, there is only one means by which either of these two types can overcome the conflict that menaces their inner selves, the psychic conflict which leads people into neuroses or more or less serious aberrations. They must become conscious of this opposition within them, and transcend it, so to speak, by becoming aware, on the one hand, of what constitutes them

as conscious beings, and, on the other, of that which is stirring in their unconscious as an element foreign to their ego; thus, by abolishing the opposition between these two movements, they can build a bridge, making a harmony between them. As a matter of fact, this harmonisation is the great task of life; and it tends to take place, by the very process of life, in each of the types.

This division of men into introverts and extraverts is, to be sure, like all psychological divisions and classifications, a little summary; it does not allow for the extremely delicate nuances of the psychic life or correspond with its finer outlines. Every one probably has his moments of introversion and his moments of extraversion; in any case, a type of humanity that was perfectly harmonious would unite in itself both these movements of life and set them to work in turn. We may say in passing that it would be very difficult to classify Jesus as of either of these types; he has the characteristics of both, and he combines them at times in a fashion that is disconcerting to our simpler natures.

In the scene which we are considering, however, what we have to deal with is undoubtedly a moment in which introversion dominates. At this moment life is in the grip of thought, and the conflict which takes place is between the question of living the messianic life, of which Jesus is thinking at the time and which he is embracing in his thought, and a whole world of vague feelings, still subconscious or barely emergent from the subconscious, that are stirring indistinctly in the depths of his personality.

To refer once more to introversion, since the temptation constitutes a moment of introversion in Christ's life, let us see what are the issues it may have. Silberer has shown us how the crisis of introversion may be solved; he has assigned to it *three possible issues, magic, dementia*

praecox, and *mysticism*. What he means by this may be summed up as follows:

1. One who is on the road of introversion, of a return upon himself, may fail in action by seeking the satisfaction of his passions in an artificial manner. It is this which, among all the primitive peoples, has given rise to magic.

2. Or he may stop short with the dream, lazily enjoying himself in that forgetfulness of external reality which is favourable to the return upon oneself; this indolence of the spirit ends in his creating about him an imaginary world which takes the place of the real world, and the introvert finally founders in the dream. This is the neurosis known as *dementia praecox* in which the patient is no longer aware of what surrounds him and lives in an imaginary world. It is the suicide of the personality.

3. Lastly, there is the third solution, in which the introvert ends in the mystic life, creating in himself, that is, a unity between his outer tasks and his inner experiences. But here again there are two possible directions. The mystic life, as a matter of fact, does not always represent a state of equilibrium, far from it! That is why the Catholic Church has made the distinction between *divine mysticism* and *diabolic mysticism*. There is a healthy mysticism, and there is an unhealthy mysticism. Consequently, a final danger of introversion consists in leading one into morbid aberrations of the mystical life, through a neglect of the moral control exercised over the impulses that spring up from the subconscious and are liable to pour into the consciousness pell-mell and pervert it.

Turning now to the text of the three temptations which sum up the great decisive crisis at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, we observe the curious fact, curious yet as clear as day, that they offer Christ precisely the three disastrous issues of introversion.

First a sort of prologue sums up the situation. It tells us:

1. That the *Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness,* or that it led or conducted him there; [13]

2. *To be tempted of the devil* (Matt. iv, 1), or that he was *tempted of Satan* (Mark i, 13);

3. That *he was in the midst of wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto him;* it is thus, at least, that Mark sums up the situation.

We have here what suggests a perfect psychological abridgement of the process of introversion.

1. It is the Spirit, the divine subconscious forces, the inner impulsion, the *élan* which comes from above and reaches man by seizing him inwardly, it is, as Freud would say, the *libido,* the cluster of unknown vital energies which drives Jesus into the wilderness. He feels that he is obliged to go into the wilderness, not merely the wilderness of sand and rocks which the earth offers him, but also that wilderness of the soul, that deep solitude in which one descends into oneself, far from human beings, in meditation and silence.

2. In this wilderness he does not find God only, he finds Satan as well, the devil, the genius of evil who tempts us and tries to make us fall. Is not this an affirmation of the fact that in descending into ourselves, in communing with ourselves, in seeking to encounter the inner impulse that springs up naturally in our being, we recognise in it a double nature? There is in every man a demoniacal subconscious, forces that abase as well as others that elevate the being. The attraction which draws us towards introversion may be at once a divine attraction and a temptation. According to the issue which the introversion is going

[13] Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημου ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος. (Matt. iv, 1.)
Καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον. (Mark i, 12.)
Καὶ ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. (Luke iv, 1.)

to have it may be a flight towards life or a recoil towards the shadowy regions of death and destruction.

3. With this affirmation come to be united the two symbols which, in the fairy-tales, myths and legends of all peoples, represent *danger* and the *victory over danger.* Jesus is surrounded by *wild beasts;* these are the dragons, the serpents which, in the myth, surround the hero, ready to devour him, and bar him from the path that leads to the treasure of life. He must conquer this wild beast, this guardian of the treasure. In other words, he must kill in himself that which stands in the way of the new birth, the unfolding of the new life. And the divine forces conspire with the hero to help him in his gigantic task; they are the envoys of God, *the angels,* energies of a superhuman origin, but personal and human in their form, fraternal allies who are there to co-operate in the work of life.

So much for the broad outline of the situation. It is that of the hero who is preparing to live the true life, the eternal romance which humanity has always dreamed of and projected into its favourite ancestors. But there is no question here of romance and dreams; the part is going to be played in full reality by the Son of Man.

I. Let us now take up the temptations in detail. The first consists of *changing the stones into bread.* Jesus has been fasting for a long time. The exterior occasion that sharpens the temptation, that turns Christ's thoughts towards the temptation, is the hunger he feels. But this is merely the reason that leads him to consider the problem of life from a certain angle. It must always be remembered that at the bottom of the thoughts of Jesus at this moment is the question, "How can I realise the life of revelation which I must lead before men? In what way can I be the Messiah?" Thereupon a first solution suggests itself, thanks to this sudden hunger which torments him and which he

would like to lessen or get rid of. Has he the right to employ the divine energies which he feels welling up within him to satisfy first his own life, his own needs? Why not? After all, however lofty the work may be which he wishes to undertake, he must first live in order to undertake it; he must eat his bread, have something upon which to subsist, and a little more perhaps. This is the temptation that comes to almost all intelligent young people who desire to serve God in their life. "Yes, I want to serve God, I want to devote myself to this or that noble cause," they say to themselves. "But first people must give me the means or I must procure them!" Make a fortune, for example, so that, later, one may use one's money to relieve suffering humanity. Acquire all the education one needs to become distinguished so that, by this very distinction, one may win the mastery over the wills of men and conduct them as a leader along the paths of virtue and happiness. Gratify, in a word, one's own instincts first, which are nothing if not legitimate, so that later, freed from the fetters which necessity always lays upon the impulses of the heart, one may give oneself up entirely to working for others. In the case of Jesus, this perhaps signifies that in order to become the Messiah recognised by the people he must first acquire a material, outward situation that will attract the attention of others.

Christ discerns a temptation under the apparent legitimacy of the effort which is demanded. "Man does not live by bread alone." In seeking first one's own personal satisfaction in the will to power that animates one, in placing the inner *élan vital,* the gift of the forces of God, first of all at the service of oneself, one simply runs the risk of spiritual death. This, at bottom, is the temptation to *magic;* it is this which has dominated all the magicians of the past and of the present. They have never done any-

thing but monopolise, for their own profit first, the powers of life that are at work in their souls; and what happens is that by this practice their souls are slowly destroyed, deprived of the food which alone nourishes them. They understand the inner word no longer as the word of God, but as an instrument of which they make use for their own success. It is an error to suppose that one can first satisfy oneself at the fountain that springs up within one and then think afterwards of others. When one has made bread for oneself out of the stones of the road one no longer thinks of anything but that bread. The soul dies, submerged by action, by external labour for the sake of personal gain. The inner energies, turned towards outward action for the benefit of the individual alone, are lost for society and the Kingdom of God. This is the case with many a life which might have been beautiful, but which, in all sincerity, can no longer do anything that is not egotistical and useless to others.

By becoming a *magician Messiah,* a worker of miracles, a thaumaturgist, Jesus would no doubt have assured his success among the people. But the forces which he would have employed to this end would have been, by that very fact, withdrawn from God, turned aside from the moral life, by means of which God is able to reach men and touch them. To repulse this temptation thus constituted a renunciation, since it lessened his chances for success in the Messiahship; but it was, at the same time, a divine victory, the gift to the Father of his whole self, the conservation of the integrity of the inner energies for the work of establishing the Kingdom of God. In refusing a magical Messiahship and seeing a temptation in it, Jesus set bounds to his success in the world, but he recognised the true rights of life; he refused to displace life's axis, to violate its authentic meaning. If we place ourselves at the psycho-analytic point of view, we

may say that the danger was that, in concentrating all his strength on thought—in his case fixed upon the Messiahship—he would have allowed the subconscious feelings to follow their own will, attaching themselves now here, now there, now upon one object, now upon another, at the mere chance of his successive impulses. By an effort of his whole being, Jesus became aware of the respective values of the different feelings that stirred confusedly in him. He differentiated them from his own personality, from the conscious I, set each one in its place, and discerned the temptation constituted by some of them and the obligation imposed by the others.

II. One might protract these considerations indefinitely. Let us pass on to the second temptation. Jesus is transported to a pinnacle of the Temple and the devil says to him: "Cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." [14] We might call this the *temptation to fanaticism.* Jesus is tempted to commit an act of folly, to throw himself madly into the apocalyptic dream, to become a half-demented Messiah who no longer lives in reality or reckons with reality but commits himself to the forces that exalt him, without even asking how they accord with the surrounding reality. In religious language, it is to "tempt God" to ask him to intervene otherwise than by the laws which he has himself established, to violate these laws. This is to transgress deliberately the rules that preside over the normal human development, and consequently to choose, to desire, to seek the *abnormal.* It is, in a word, to take refuge in the dream in order to escape from reality. And this is exactly what the victims of *dementia praecox* do. The neurosis of this name consists in this dream-life, this

[14] Quotation, placed in the mouth of Satan, from Psalm xci, 11-12.

life which—let us say it boldly—is lost, is destroyed in the dream.

This is the road, then, of which Jesus catches a glimpse, a *neurotic Messiahship*, the career of those *fanatics* who sometimes carry away whole populations with the generosity and the beauty of their dream, but who are lost with them in the unreal. Jesus knows quite well that to allow the divine forces at work in him to evaporate thus into nothingness is to be unfaithful to and even rebellious against the Father; it is to falsify the normal means which he requires in order that he may work in him and through him in men.

Here we have another renunciation, an unmistakable one, the renunciation of the charm of exaltation and the suggestive and alluring impression that exaltation makes on the masses. This again means a cutting off of the paths to success; but it means also the inexorable maintenance of moral and physical health and the sanctity of life as well. Jesus flies from the seduction of the dream and rejects that species of Messiahship which would make of him a fanatic, leading humanity into a brilliant but delusive adventure. He who deliberately puts himself outside the laws that regulate reality has no right to the help of the living God; he abjures life; he confuses the paths of the soul; he does something that is sinister and even criminal. This is the danger we all run when, refusing to take the world as it is, because it is too saddening, we prefer to see it through the rose-coloured glasses of an enchanting dream; when we let go of the reins of the will, persuading ourselves that we may commit the worst follies, and that God, because he loves us, will always intervene at the desired moment. Who has not known this temptation, and who has not at times succumbed to it? It is the danger of imaginative people who are wearied and bored by the labour of reasoning. It

is here that the neurosis lies in wait for its man, and often strikes him down, never to let him go again. Jesus recovered control of himself and put out of his thoughts this form of Messiahship.

III. Thus we come to the last of the three temptations. At first sight it seems to be the clumsiest of snares; yet it is in fact the most subtle because, in the concise form in which it is brought to us, it does not appear to be a snare at all. This is the temptation to *false mysticism,* diabolic mysticism. It is possible to be the Messiah again by preserving the appearance of sanctity, and almost sanctity itself, while consenting to compromise with the spirit of the age. One may simply be the Messiah whom the people expect, a cautious, prudent leader who will act in harmony with the priestly authorities and gradually bring about a national uprising in which politics will ally itself with the religious sentiment. Why not? Christ, while listening to the Pharisees, has seen clearly that this would be quite practicable; but he has also seen under what conditions alone it would be possible to keep up the alliance and achieve success. He would have to make concessions, to reckon with the opinions of leaders and people of importance, to submit to easy compromises of conscience. In short, he would have to bend the knee before the evil spirits whom the times adored, before *the power of money* and *the authority of the world.* In return for a few concessions, which would hardly matter, thanks to the power which he knows exists in him, he would then be the Messiah, recognised by all; and when he possessed the ear of the masses, what things could he not undertake on behalf of the good!

This is the temptation of all strong men who see a brilliant career opening before them, who feel within themselves all the possibilities of becoming great, exercising a powerful influence and opening up paths for the welfare

and happiness of humanity. And how many sink in the mire of this treacherous swamp! To have a pure and lofty mind and altruistic and charitable plans, to live only for the sake of others; yet, in order that one may be able to act, to consent to one or two of those secret compromises of which, as a matter of fact, nobody will ever know. How many careers, respectable and honoured by men, have had no spiritual effect because, though no one has known it, they have been founded on that momentary prostration before him who "gives to whomsoever he wills all the kingdoms of the earth."

Such a manner as this of becoming the Messiah was immediately rejected by Jesus with horror: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." [15] And why does he reject it? Can we say that in doing so he is repressing certain instinctive tendencies of the inmost being? It is just the other way. To admit deceit and hypocrisy is not to augment the possibilities of life; it is, on the contrary, to diminish them. It is because the world in general countenances this fashion of living a double life that men are not all they might be and do not realise themselves in a complete way. To adore Satan is to deflect into paths that lead nowhere a part of the *élan vital* which ought to help one to embrace life's tasks and accomplish them; to divert it from its sole legitimate end, to prevent its sublimation. Now Jesus intends to be fully that which he ought to be, to lead to their complete realisation all the energies that seethe in the depths of his being, to become fully, in the language of religion, what the Father wishes him to become, or, in the language of psycho-analysis, to sublimate all the instinctive forces that labour in his subconsciousness. Thus the obstacles must be removed, and they are all summed

[15] Matt. iv, 10.

up and incarnated for him in this genius of evil who bears the name of Satan: "Get thee hence, Satan!"

After the three temptations which we have just recapitulated, there remains only one possible issue for the life of Christ. It is expressed symbolically in the text by these words: "Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him."[16] The devil who departs is the inner resistance which yields to the pressure of the *élan vital;* the angels are the deep energies which come to the rescue, the forces of sublimation on the wings of which life rises to meet the tasks it must undertake. Henceforth, there is for him only one way of living his public life; this is to realise through it everything that God has placed within him, in his inner and secret life, the whole of his mystical life, the whole of the experience upon which his soul has been nourished. He will give men *everything he has within him,* and nothing else. That is the only loyal thing to do. Perhaps this is what it is to be the Messiah? In any case, Jesus can and will be nothing else. And it is in this frame of mind that he leaves the wilderness to begin his ministry in Galilee.

Henceforth, the task is clear. God does not manifest himself through acts that are in contradiction to the deep life of the soul. The only way to reveal him to the world is, having him fully in oneself, to be simply oneself, whatever may be one's walk of life. Jesus is going to say what he knows and what he is inwardly; he is going to render an exact testimony to what he realises in the depths of his being. His life will probably be obscure, without any external glory; but the inner harmony which has now been realised among all the forces that animate him will constitute the only possible appeal to human morality, to the conscience of men. This is the sort of Messiah that he will

[16] Cf. Matt. iv, 11; Mark i, 13; Luke iv, 13.

be. It matters little whether people give him this name or not, or whether he is the Messiah in the historical and traditional sense; he is to be a Messiah in the sense of moral truth and the Spirit, that is in the divine-human sense.

Let us stop a moment on the threshold of this ministry which opens in humility and silence. There has never been, perhaps, in the whole history of humanity, a more solemn, sacred moment. It is the complete gift of a life to Truth. Without pomp of any sort, it is at once the perfect consecration and the most sublime flight towards life that has ever taken place in this world. For once, all the forces of a human consciousness are dedicated to life; nothing is withheld; the whole divine current is released and flows forward in its entirety, spreading this human life as an imperishable witness through the bosom of humanity. When Jesus said later that he was "the bread of life" he found the exact image. He offered the whole of himself as nourishment for the human soul that is starved for truth. For in a world such as ours to desire the whole life of God in oneself, to accept all the exigencies of the divine life in oneself and to accomplish its task is to accept the fate of being misunderstood, rejected, sacrificed by those who do not desire this life. But it is also to give them the only efficacious help, the only raft of safety to which they can cling.

We shall take up this point again when we treat of the personality of Jesus and its characteristics from the psychological point of view. But first we must examine a little more closely into the nature of his ministry, and particularly his teaching.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF JESUS

§ 1. ITS FORM

After the Temptation, Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, as Luke [1] tells us, set off on the road to Galilee. After having summoned about him a few disciples he took up his abode in the little town of Capernaum, not far from the Sea of Galilee, around which so many memories cling; and he began to teach.

In this teaching, which has already been so much—perhaps too much—discussed, for it often seems to us to have been deflowered by all that has been said about it, there are two things to be considered: the *basis,* that is the ideas, and the *form,* or the manner in which the ideas are presented. A great deal might be said about these two aspects of Christ's teaching. I shall take up a few points only, with special attention to their psychological bearing; and first let us consider the *form.*

Again, of this form I shall not speak in detail. Let us ignore what might be called the very original charm which is so unique in the style of Jesus, the poetry that emanates from his least words and that has made of some of them jewels which humanity has clasped forever in the depths of its memory and its heart.[2]

I should rather call attention to a certain feature of the teaching of Jesus which, although it is very marked, has yet been less often discussed. This is the *affirmative character*

[1] "ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος" (Luke iv, 14.)

[2] See, at the end of the volume, the appendix on the poetry of Jesus.

of his manner of teaching. Instead of proceeding by prohibitions and negative commands, he proceeds by affirmations. It seems as if his whole nature were turned to the positive side of life, the side of the "yea." In this respect it must be admitted that his disciples in the course of history have been very unfaithful to him. When we think of the number of restrictions and prohibitions, the "thou shalt nots"—thou shalt not do, thou shalt not touch—when we think of the amount of neuropathic scrupulosity that persists even to-day, in some Christian circles, we feel a sort of liberation in returning to the teaching of Christ himself and finding it so affirmative and so positive. It is just the opposite of the "taboos" which we encounter in such numbers in the primitive religions, even in the superior religions, and of which the Old Testament offers us more than one example. In opposition to the moral code of the Pharisees, which was encumbered with prohibitions and rendered impotent by inhibitions, the moral code of Jesus is large, affirmative in the face of life, free from shackles. He dwells, we observe, not on what one must not do, but on what one must do. He lays stress not upon negative duties, but upon positive duties, knowing quite well that when one accomplishes these the others accomplish themselves. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you," he says, "do ye even so to them." He has not come "to destroy" (to quote his own words) "but to fulfil." And it is at this that his teaching aims. He desires to bring forth in humanity a life that shall not be a perpetual repression, but rather an ever larger fulfilment of everything which exists in man and asks only to be developed.

Hence that luminousness, that broad daylight which shines over the words of Jesus and gives them their fresh, springlike tonality, that character of newness and spontaneity which astonishes all who hear them for the first

time. We have the impression that we are not dealing with old rules, with the everlasting worn-out expedients with which the ancient religions have wearied the human conscience. There is something here that is new and young, something which takes its rhythm from life, which is one with the rushing current and the glow of the affirmations of childhood. This is why Jesus pleases the young, that is, if they encounter his teaching directly and do not, as is too often the case, find it deformed to the point of being unrecognisable by the preconceived ideas of those who have made themselves its champions and licensed custodians.

Listen to his first words. From the beginning, in the Sermon on the Mount, they are clear and joyous. What do they announce? Happiness. They are an affirmation of happiness cried into the ears of those who no longer believe in happiness because they no longer feel it in themselves:

"Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the Kingdom of God.

"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.

"Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven." [3]

Upon these happy people who need only to become aware of their inner fortune he imposes no duty made up of restrictions; he does not point out to them what they are not, or the obstacles that lie before them. He rather tells them what they are, what they already are potentially and may become, what they are sure to become with an always greater fulness: "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? . . . Ye are the light of the world. . . . Neither do men light a

[3] Luke vi, 20-23.

lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house." [4] This is a launching into life. Jesus urges them into the open water; he tells them to go forward, to set out, to have no fear, to yield to the divine impulse which is within them.

How different from the dull, prudent words of the givers of good counsel, the moralising sages. The point here is risk, which is always preferable to moral indolence. It is a sort of echo of the ordeal through which he has passed in the temptation. Jesus does not want this humanity which he loves to lose itself in the dream of life; he incites it to the assault of reality with full confidence in the forces which animate it and which are the very forces of God.

And we have only to continue the reading of the gospels to see that, from first to last, the same note rings through them. In the discussions with the Pharisees, particularly concerning the Sabbath, he does not oppose their rules with other rules. He affirms (it is an affirmation, not a negation) the supremacy of life over everything else. "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." [5] Away with the restrictions that fetter life! Listen to the voice of the God who speaks within you and everything will come right.

Sin bends the brows of the sick; they feel themselves under a condemnation; their souls are bound as it were by that old doctrine that sickness is a punishment for sin. Jesus approaches them and they are freed by an affirmation: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And finding once more within them the spring of superhuman energies, the sick depart with their hearts full of gratitude, bearing their crutches on their shoulders.

Everywhere, always, the method is the same. Moved with compassion before the multitude, because they are in

[4] Matt. v, 13-16.
[5] Mark ii, 28.

a state of weariness and prostration, like sheep that have no shepherd, he cries: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Then, having summoned the twelve, he gives them "power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." [6]

It seems here, truly, as if Jesus were a psycho-analyst before the event. His is the same method, the same confidence in the work of life. He knew that what destroyed life was the obstacles and the negations with which the false doctors of the spirit surround it. And he entered upon his ministry as a liberator, a Saviour. In order to save, he began by giving people confidence in Him who makes life and breathes the soul into it; he teaches men to trust the vital urge that rises in them all. He teaches them also, or tries to teach them, what God is, that He is the paternal presence which all may feel within them but which people do not recognise because they misunderstand it or because it is caught fast in the subconscious layers of their being and not permitted to come forth into the light.

There was in all this an infinite world to reveal. Jesus had mastered it and he was full of the joy of this revelation. But how was he to make others feel it? How was he to communicate this ineffable grace? He found the secret in a form of teaching that came naturally to his lips, the *parables*.

§ 2. THE PARABLES [7]

It is in this form of expression, at once old and new, that Jesus reveals himself as an altogether unparalleled master

[6] Matt. ix, 36; x, 1.
[7] Cf. WEINEL, H., *Die Gleichnisse Jesu.* Leipzig, Teubner, 1905.

of psychology. And what is interesting and remarkable about this is that he was so without suspecting it, without desiring it, by instinct as it were. He had no intention of creating a form; hence the total absence of any air of deliberation in these admirable little compositions which bear the stamp of his genius and which are found nowhere else with the same characteristics as in the gospels. Our childhood has been so nourished and our religious thought so shaped by them that we are not perhaps as aware as we might be of their originality. "It is in the parable especially," says Renan, "that the master excels. Nothing in Judaism had given him the model for this delightful form. He was the creator of it. It is true that we find in the Buddhist books parables that are exactly the same in tone and composition as the parables in the gospels. But it is difficult to suppose that any Buddhist influence could have been exercised upon the latter. The gentle spirit and the deep feeling that animate nascent Christianity and Buddhism equally suffice perhaps to explain these similarities." [8]

Renan does not seem to us to go deep enough here. It is obviously difficult to explain these analogies between Buddhism and Christianity if we cling to historical connections. An equal "gentleness" and a certain "depth of feeling" common to both religions do not suffice to account for them either. From history and superficial psychology we must pass to a somewhat more profound analysis of the psychic states common to humanity in general. We shall then see that the same causes produce the same effects, however far apart in space and time the two human groups may be and however complete the absence of relations between them.

One of the most appreciable results of the investigations of psychology has been precisely to make us feel this psychic

[8] RENAN, op. cit., p. 174.

unity of the human race. It is not an accident that the parable should have been born in two religions as different as Buddhism and Christianity. We have in this an illustration of the life of symbols in the human soul. Everywhere, at all times, men have sought to express by means of symbols and allegories what could not otherwise be described except by an effort of abstract thought, which would obscure the truth instead of rendering it luminous.

Before thought was strong enough in humanity to create a philosophy, later, too, after this philosophy had been established, indeed in the very bosom of the different philosophies, the creation of symbols was and has remained constantly in process. As early as among the primitive peoples we find the traces and sometimes the actual features of a symbolism. What is *totemism* but a vast system of symbols, representing profound psychic realities? Their meaning is sometimes obliterated in the memory of the savages; sometimes it is even completely forgotten and lost. But a secret correspondence continues to exist between the symbolical ceremonies and the baffled soul that has instituted them, just as it exists between our rites of to-day, the Holy Communion, or the Eucharist, for example, and many simple consciences which, without grasping their meaning, find something in them nevertheless and tremble in the breath of the mystery that is hidden in them.

To the question why this life of symbols propagates itself and endures, an answer has become possible since the psycho-analysts have supplied us with its essential elements. The manifestations of the deep life of the soul, that immense network of conscious and especially unconscious proceedings of which the human psyche is the theatre, cannot express themselves outwardly otherwise than under the form of images. The most important psychic processes can be represented in their living totality only by means of sym-

bols; but these images, these symbols borrowed from the surrounding life, are limited in number. It is inevitable that, in order to express its life, the human spirit should constantly fall back upon the same comparisons and rediscover the same associations of ideas.

Hence the fact that in all races and at all epochs we encounter the same symbols used to express the same inner facts. The psycho-analysts have already delimited certain *symbol-types* which they find virtually everywhere. Among the principal of these we may mention the symbols of the *father* and the *mother,* the *dragon,* the *serpent,* the *lion* and the wild or dangerous animals in general; that of the *box,* or of the *basket* or the *coffer;* that of the *seed,* of the *beverage that gives life,* of *wheat.*

The life of these symbols in the depths of the human soul is very complicated.[9] They become charged with different meanings as the inner life evolves; they do not always signify the same things. Adopted from the earliest relations of the child with his family and with nature, they attend the man through the ever more crowded and more widely ramifying course of his later relations. Expressions of the earthy, primitive life, they gradually ascend in dignity; the same symbols that have at first expressed the natural and often coarse and gross relations of the instinctive being with his physical surroundings, come to be charged with a delicate moral significance, often with an import that is very noble and all but the opposite of the sense which they originally possessed.

Thus, to take an example, the *mother,* who symbolises in certain primitive myths the object of desire, the object to whom one looks for caresses, whom the child desires quite to himself, who is sometimes the object of the first sexual desires, the mother comes to symbolise also the desire for

[9] Cf. above: Introduc. Chap. II, §2, p. 42.

a new birth; towards her the child, grown to manhood, turns his eyes, as if in the hope that she will preside for him at a new birth which will be entirely pure and of a nature that is altogether spiritual. The mother becomes the *virgin mother* who protects the life of the spirit and presides over its development. This is the case not only in the Catholic cult, but in others as well.

This life of the symbols, with their variations in meaning for those who desire to rise in the moral scale, has an unequalled importance for education. In learning to find, to discover the ever more lofty signification of the symbols which it carries in itself and which emerge in its dreams, its myths, its legends, humanity becomes capable of progressing along the paths which life itself places in its way; it finds its path, and each of its members finds the path which is properly his own. Where every sort of counsel remains fruitless because it is out of gear with life, because it remains external to the person, the evocation of the eternal and universal symbols penetrates most deeply; it has the effect of leaving the field free for personal interpretation, and thus, unlike precise commands and direct counsels, runs no risk of violating the consciousness. And then it opens up for later developments a horizon still more vast.

We can easily understand, then, why Jesus chose this mode of instruction. He reveals here his exceptional moral tact, that eminently divine gift of bringing souls to birth, of calling out the life that throbs in them, and revealing them to themselves with a respect that is unknown to authoritarians who bend others to their system.

By calling out, in little simple stories, taken from nature or from the everyday life about him, the whole background of the psychic life, Jesus had discovered the only means of teaching souls to free themselves from their inner complications and meet the Father in the most secret sanctuary

of their private experiences. It was an art in itself, but it had been discovered without the resources of art, through the creative intuition of a personality of which the foundation was a radical and absolute sincerity towards itself. Always in touch with his own innermost life, Jesus had naturally and by instinct found the secret of reaching that of others. The parables are the direct fruit of this ingenuous and spontaneous sincerity.

There are some theologians who maintain, in opposition to Renan, that the form of the parables was borrowed from the teaching of the rabbis, Jesus having often observed their method of instruction. On a superficial consideration this is true. The rabbis evidently did utter parables; but when one realises how great was their spiritual poverty and how little they were able to draw from the reality that surrounded them, one perceives that they can have given him nothing but the bare framework and scarcely that.

One remark, in conclusion, which will enable us to pass from the form of the teaching of Jesus to the content. As we turn over the gospels, stopping to glance at the various parables, we cannot fail to be struck by the fact that most of them begin with these words: *"The kingdom of God is like unto a . . ."* [10] There are a few exceptions, for example the parable of the sower, or that of the prodigal son. But even these, when we consider not merely the words but the meaning, have the same object as the others: to cause the reality and the significance of the kingdom to rise before the eyes of the listeners. The symbols they make use of and the allegories they employ always serve this purpose. Thus the seed, the springing up of the grain,

[10] Even if this stereotyped formula had been applied to all the parables by the redactors of the gospels, it would not in any way alter the bearing of our remark. The first Christian generation had felt instinctively the significance of the parables and its formula, naïvely generalised, expressed a very sure and very just sense of the common aim of all the parables.

the Father's house, the wedding chamber, the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price, the net that gathers the fish, all these figures endeavour to give an impression of the great spiritual reality which Jesus is striving to communicate to men and which he calls *the Kingdom*.

§ 3. THE ESSENCE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING: THE KINGDOM AND THE MESSIAH

The preaching of the *Kingdom of Heaven* or the *Kingdom of God* was thus the great work of Jesus. It was to this that he dedicated his life. His only concern was to reveal to men what the Kingdom of God was, how they could enter into it and what they would find there. It was in this way that he saw his messianic mission. The phrase reappears continually in his sayings, and the thing itself is constantly in his thoughts.

Now, what is the Kingdom of God? The theologians have discussed at great length the exact meaning to be attached to the phrase; and here, as elsewhere, they have armed themselves with an ever growing and ever more complex historical erudition devoted to the discovery of the origins of this concept of the "Kingdom" in the times that preceded Jesus and the works that he might have read. It is obviously undeniable that he may have found the expression in earlier writings and that the history of the chosen people may have furnished him with many of the features of the doctrine of the Kingdom. But as we read the contradictory statements of the theologians themselves and the solutions which they reach we cannot escape from a certain feeling of scepticism as to the historical origins of this notion. After all, the best thing is to seek for the light that illumined Jesus not in the past but in his own psychology.

To him the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, meant the reign of the Father established in the heart and on earth, that is to say, at once a future state and a present state, something the advent of which has already been proclaimed, but which has not yet been realised in its entirety, since, while God reigns henceforth over the souls that have accepted Christ's message, he does not reign over all. With the first acts of the Christians the earth begins to be subject to him. The Kingdom is thus a psychic state before it is a social state; it is the psychic state, the spiritual attitude which Jesus realises perfectly in himself and which he desires to see become general, knowing as he does that this is to have life, and to have it abundantly. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." [11]

But then, if this is the Kingdom, we are again brought back to the central experience of Christ, that mystical experience which he expresses when he says "the Father." The Kingdom is the Father, as Jesus conceives him, feels him, realises him; it is this Father received, obeyed, served at every moment by men. Everything in the Gospel brings us back to this essential point; and this point is the centre of the inner experience of Christ. The new life which he reveals to the world is the Father grasped as he has grasped him. The salvation which he brings to the world is the Father known as he knows him. The love which he demands for men is the Father served as he serves him. This experience of the Father, however, rich, abundant, broad as life, sovereign and full of solemn power, cannot be grasped by reason, cannot be communicated by thought. It must be awakened in the hearts of men by a purely

[11] John iv, 14.

spiritual contact, and words do not suffice for it. That is why, in his teaching, Jesus did not give the people ideas or doctrines, in spite of what the Church has said; he gave them images, symbols, evocations tending to set in motion the powers of the soul. This was the particular point towards which his effort bore. He wished to render God sensible to the heart. He wished to arouse and foster in human individuals the glow of the divine energies and at the same time to free the paths of the soul from the obstacles, the repressions which constrain life and stifle it. He wished to make men feel this Father who is in heaven but who is at the same time on earth, so that God should no longer be regarded as a far-away monarch, but as the closest of the loving beings who surround us.

To sum up, we may say then that at the centre of the teaching of Jesus Christ is the teaching of the Kingdom, and that at the centre of the teaching of the Kingdom is the personal experience of Christ himself, imposed upon him as supreme, decisive, and dominant with respect not only to his own development, but also to that of the world. This experience of the Father, the inner, personal God who is also the creative and sovereign God, He who reveals himself to the world and whom the world seeks in vain to understand—this experience is in a way unique with Jesus. We find it in no other man invested with such sovereignty or such absoluteness, especially with such an indisputable clearness. If we must have a miracle we shall find it here, in the supernatural evidence and the absolute and imperious clearness which this central experience of the Father presents in the case of Jesus. It is this that lies at the base of everything he is led to say; and in all his sayings it is this which he seeks to reveal to men in the only manner that is possible, that is, not by explaining it but by striving to arouse it in others.

The same thing is true of the idea and the concept of the *Messiah.* Jesus felt that he was the Messiah more and more, and in a manner he applied himself to playing the part. He became aware of his Messiahship first and foremost through the experience which he had of the unique originality of his feeling for the Father. He felt that he was unique in having seen God as he had seen him, in the spontaneous glow, in the urge of the inner life that constituted the essence and the principle of his personality. The abyss which, in this respect, separated him from other men seemed to him not a reason for doubt but an indication of a unique vocation. He was, more than any one else, the Son of Man, Man *par excellence,* because, more strongly than any other, he felt his divine sonship. This Father who stirs within him in so incontestable a way has given him a mission: that of making his kingdom come. Jesus must therefore assume the unique and central place in the kingdom; he is, through his own personality, the secret and the meaning of the Kingdom. It is by giving himself to others, by confiding to them the mystery of his most intimate psychic life that he will save them. That is why, without pride, in the most sincere humility, he preaches, in a certain sense, himself; he draws men to him, he wills them to him, he entreats them to come to him. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. . . . I am meek and lowly in heart," etc., etc.[12]

The Kingdom and the Messiah, these two great pivots of Christ's teaching are, therefore, in their original germ, two psychic experiences of Jesus. First, that this God, the Father, who manifests himself in the vital impulse which is at the centre of the personality, must reign. Then the other, which is only a prolongation of the first: the Father must

[12] Matt. xi, 28-30.

reign everywhere and in all men, in men's consciences and in the world, as he reigns in me. Here we have what might be called the moral obligation of Christ, the imperative duty which gives to his life its only possible meaning.

Now any such attempt thus to trace back to the personal experience of Christ the whole Christian doctrine is certain to be met with objections. And I clearly foresee what is going to be said, and reasonably said, against it. I shall be asked: "But what do you make of those discourses at the end of his career in which there seems to be suggested the millennial hope of a reign of the Messiah upon earth? What do you make of the parables at the end of the gospels, in which the reign of the Messiah is described in apocalyptic colours and with terrestrial and not merely spiritual expectations? How can you reconcile, for example, the details of Chapter XXIV of Matthew with the purely spiritual experience of which you speak?

Here, indeed, the Kingdom of God does appear as a sort of social and material, as well as a spiritual, revolution. We have the sign of the Son of Man rending the heavens from east to west; the sun is darkened, the moon does not give her light, the stars fall from the sky. They that are on the house-tops will not have time to come down. Woe unto them that are with child in that day, for they shall not be able to flee! People may well pray that this great day does not come in the winter. . . . Then, to the sound of the trumpet, the angels will gather together the elect from the four winds for the judgment. This judgment will consist of a separation of the good from the bad into two sharply defined groups (the parable of the sheep and the goats) of which the one will sit down to a feast presided over by Abraham and the patriarchs, and the other will go down into Gehenna, "where the fire is not quenched." The place of delights is separated from the place of torments by so

great an abyss that it is impossible to pass from the one to the other (the parable of the wicked rich man and Lazarus).

All these features, it must be confessed, are singularly material in character and scarcely harmonise with the conception we were defending a moment ago. And indeed it is true that in reading the gospels we are often arrested, surprised and even a little shocked. How can we reconcile all these things with the image which we have formed of Jesus, the spiritual Saviour insisting, before everything else, upon the inner life?

Here we are obliged to take contingencies into account and remember that Jesus came among men as a man, and with no other title. He sprang from a human lineage; he felt the weight of human contingencies. His soul did not develop differently from ours, and he received consequently the stamp of his people and his environment. His religious experience, his whole inner life was necessarily intellectualised according to the moulds that were furnished him by the times and the environment. He did not introduce, it was not his mission to introduce, *new ideas;* what he brought was a new *life,* which is a very different matter.

Now the effort of life, it is to be remarked, does not consist in breaking away from everything that the race and the times have slowly elaborated. To attempt this would be to end in madness or to escape into egotistical and destructive dreams, and Jesus had put this temptation from him. The only effort of life that succeeds is one that avails itself, on the contrary, of everything which the race and the times constitute in order to benefit people spiritually and lift to a higher level what people feel that they possess in themselves.

The experience of the Kingdom, that of the Father, the feeling of the unique place which he occupied, this inner movement, this psychic *élan,* this spiritual urge had to be

translated into intellectual terms, condensed into thoughts, into words and images, as much in the case of Jesus as in our own case. Life must always be translated in order to be expressed; that is a law inherent in our human condition, and it always translates itself in terms of the characteristics and the images of the time in which we live.

What we find here, then, is the intervention of the influence and the properties of the Jewish environment in which Jesus lived and the epoch in which he developed. The environment and the epoch furnished him with two intellectual frames or moulds, *apocalyptic messianism* and the *Judaic eschatology*.

When Jesus reached the conviction that the reign of God was approaching, that it was being inaugurated in himself, that the Father spoke through him in an exceptional manner, we must not imagine, as we are so prone to do, that his brain and his imagination were empty of all ideas, that they were like a blank page on which he had only to trace entirely new characters. He was just like one of ourselves when, in the midst of life, we become conscious of a new spiritual revelation. The latter does not suppress at a stroke the whole stock of ideas by which we have lived hitherto and which has been slowly elaborated in us as a result of the environment in which we have dwelt since childhood. To Jesus the words: the Kingdom of God, the Messiah, were not new words. They had acquired in the Jewish mind a very precise meaning; they were accompanied by a throng of mental pictures that were, so to speak, inseparable from them. When Jesus, following the clear line of his inner experiences, reached the point of saying to himself: "I myself am the Messiah," or "the Kingdom of God has begun in me," there immediately appeared before him all the images evoked by these two concepts in a Jewish brain of the time. Admitting that he rejected some of them

as incompatible with his personal experience, others must have remained. According to the moment, one or another of them would appear.

And the problem is more complicated even than this, for we must bear in mind here not merely the thought of Jesus, but also that of his contemporaries who heard these words, the first Christian generation that received them and put them on paper. These people were Jews also, familiar with the Jewish eschatology, imbued with the apocalyptic ideas of the times concerning the Messiah, and some of them were eager to show that their Master had fully realised the messianic expectations of the people. In the accounts that have come down to us, we have thus not only to distinguish between that which comes from Jesus and that which comes from his disciples, but to perceive that sometimes a saying whose meaning is purely spiritual has been deformed and altered owing to the incomprehension of people who were imbued with the apocalyptic messianism.

We see how difficult it is, even when we hold to the very letter of the gospels, to form an exact idea of what Jesus expected. Was the Kingdom of God to come suddenly, like a catastrophe, or was it to develop slowly, like a germination? Was the Messiah to return in triumph before this generation had passed, or was he not to appear till the end of the world, at some indeterminate time of which he himself was unaware? Would he have to wait for outward signs that would announce this moment, or would there be a dazzling revelation of a purely spiritual order? Such are the many questions, the many problems which the theologians settle according to their preferences.

The vagueness, the fluctuating and uncertain character of the doctrine of the Kingdom have been the despair of many. For us all this is an element of strength. It corroborates what we have just said. As long as it is a ques-

tion of a living experience, the Kingdom of God is a perfectly simple matter; it is when we draw away from the inner experience and enter the domain of possible material realisations that the idea becomes indeterminate and subject to diverse interpretations. It appears indeed as if Christ took every possible pains to avoid giving distinct material features to the certitudes of the moral order which he held in this connection. There is no doubt that when he spoke of the future he followed the broad lines furnished him by the admitted beliefs of his generation on the subject of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God, applying to them undoubtedly at the same time the corrections which the character of his personal experience had rendered necessary for him. But we see by the manner in which these final things are presented how little understood he was, how readily people confounded what related to the end of Jerusalem with what related to the end of the world, and how often what was only a symbol or an image was taken for an exact, prophetic description.

Renan himself seems to believe that Jesus accepted all the apocalyptic beliefs quite uncritically, that he expected a heaven where there would be a new table and a new wine and a new Passover in the material sense of all these words.[13] But this is not serious. Plainly, considering the actual state of the texts, it is very difficult to know exactly what Jesus said; we can, however, with a little intelligent insight, discern that what was important for him was not the material description of the Kingdom but its moral reality. The manner in which he represented it to himself bore no doubt the stamp of the Jewish ideas; but his trust in life and in Him who makes life went far beyond these representations and he troubled himself very little about any contradictions which they might occasionally have pre-

[13] RENAN, op. cit., pp. 290, 291.

sented. Beneath the apocalyptic messianism and the traditional eschatology, the living experience remained the capital thing. It is this which has endured and upon which we seize eagerly to-day. The Jewish colours have faded out; but the Kingdom of God remains as a reality of to-day, to-morrow, and the eternal future, as a state of the soul that is realised and propagated through communion with him who first realised it, a state of the soul that will become general some day in a transformed and regenerated humanity. We no longer feel the need of casting this Kingdom in precise material and temporal forms. It suffices for us to conceive it on the prolonged lines of an experience that has already been lived.[14]

[14] Some theologians seem to take it for granted that Jesus made use of concepts as clear-cut and ideas as accurately shaped and arranged as those which they themselves, after a minute scrutiny of the gospels and the apocalypses, have thought it necessary to form concerning the Kingdom of God and the apocalyptic events. In this, however, they distort the facts, lose connection with life and make out of a great adventure of the open air, of sun and storm, a labour of the study, an anæmic creation of myopic ideologues.

It is true that Jesus made use of the stereotyped symbols with which the epoch and the environment provided him; he could no more help using them than we can help using our native tongue to express what seethes within ourselves. But life overflowed the frame on every side, experience brimmed over the vessel that contained it. When Jesus spoke of "the Kingdom of God" he made use, I am well aware, of a current expression that was clearly defined; just as a new convert, still immensely moved by the living contact of his Saviour, makes use, when he says "Jesus Christ," of a perfectly definite expression which is apt to call up to the minds of his colder auditors nothing but a rigid and inert historical image. For this neophyte there is, beneath the expression "Jesus," a whole world, a whole life which is not so much as dreamed of by his cold listeners who believe that they perfectly understand what he is expressing. It is the same way with the theologians face to face with the eschatology and the apocalyptic aspect of Jesus. They have defined the exact historic meaning of the words they employ, and accordingly imagine that they have understood them. But the unhappy souls have forgotten the palpitating personality which vibrates behind these current images, and which has made use of them simply because they are the only coins in circulation and because they enable it to distribute through the heart of humanity the treasure, the moral and religious capital, which it conveys. The whole work of theology should be done over again with this fact in mind. We have accomplished nothing if, in defining the meaning of a word or the import of a concept that have been employed by a living, ardent,

Thus, in its essence and in its form, the teaching of Jesus has, as its original source, the very nature of his own personality. It is to this mystery that we are always and inevitably led back when we study his teaching. The essential problem is, therefore, a psychological problem. It is the psychology of Christ that will deliver up to us, the more we study it, the secret of his teaching; it is his personality which, in the last analysis, gives us the key to what people have called the evangelical doctrine of the Kingdom. Consequently, we must grip this problem a little more closely and try to understand what made Jesus, from the psychological point of view, a unique personality. But first it remains to us to consider one final aspect of his public ministry and his activity. I mean the *Miracles*.

mystical soul, we have seen in them merely what others than himself have put there. It is the very work of creative personalities to play the midwife to old formulas and give to the world the new-born child which they carry in their womb. Jesus spoke the eschatological and apocalyptical language of the Jews; but beneath the images, beneath the ancient symbolism, he inaugurated a new creation of the Spirit the meaning of which does not reveal itself through history or exegesis, but through psychology alone.

CHAPTER V

THE MIRACLES

If we are to believe the gospels, it is incontestable that Jesus performed many miracles and that miracles played an important part in his career. The gospel of Mark is a tissue of them; that of John reports several that are even more notable than the others. Under this term are included, however, very different things: on the one hand, *cures of the sick* (comprising the greater number of the miracles), on the other, *marvellous acts,* belonging to quite a different category, such as the miraculous draught of fishes, the calming of the tempest, the walking on the waves, the multiplication of the loaves, the raising of the dead, etc., and finally events of which the meaning and import are not clearly explained, such, for example, as the changing of the water into wine at the marriage in Cana and the cursing of the sterile fig-tree which withers at the word of the Master.

A first mistake which people have made and against which we must be on our guard as we take up the study of the miracles, is to consider them as violations of the natural order. The word "miracle" has come to have as its chief meaning one which it did not possess at all for the contemporaries of Jesus, and this for a very simple reason: at that epoch and in the Jewish environment people had no idea of what is for us to-day the merest commonplace, a knowledge, namely, of the natural laws and their inviolable order. We are born, so to speak, with this idea; it is imposed upon us from the very moment when we begin to reflect; our modern culture is impregnated with it. This was by no means the case in antiquity. With

the exception of the great scientific schools of Greece and their Roman disciples, the whole world lived in a state of bewilderment as to the natural and the supernatural order. The men of those days were as ignorant as children of any fixed sequence of causes and effects; they lived, as it were, as children live, amid perpetual miracles. We have all of us passed more or less through this stage and we understand it through memory. To become conscious of it we have only to recall the impressions of our childhood, that happy age when it would not have struck us as more extraordinary to see the heavens open and God himself descend from them than to see a thunderbolt strike one of the trees in the garden. The sudden realisation of one of these events would not have seemed to us more remarkable than that of the other.

For Jesus and the men of his time and country, the miraculous did not represent, therefore, any violation of the laws of nature. For them there were no laws; there were only *occurrences* and *persons* whose operations or whose activities seemed more miraculous at certain times than at others and bore witness to the intervention of God or of devils in human affairs. There was nothing to prevent a miracle from taking place. A miracle was simply an exceptionally marked sign of the presence of the divine or demoniacal forces which were continually at work in the natural world. Everything that was inexplicable seemed miraculous; and people did not feel the need that besets us to-day of explaining things scientifically, that is of connecting them with antecedents of the natural order rather than with some supernatural cause. The difference between the supernatural and the natural was scarcely felt or not felt at all.[1]

[1] We may note this facility in accepting the miraculous in the writers of the time. For example, Josephus (38-100 A.D.) accepts as per-

In approaching the study of the miracles, then, we must bear in mind this difference in mentality between ourselves and the men of the age of Jesus.

A second point, which we must also bear in mind, and which is a consequence of this mentality, is that at that time people expected miracles of every hero, especially of every founder of a religion. It was quite natural, they thought, that an exceptional man should manifest himself by exceptional acts and should be pointed out to the multitude by the god who protected him. There was nothing to stand in the way of any such idea; there was not, as there is to-day, any cycle of natural laws to be broken. Everything concurred to render it reasonable; no contradiction existed between the miraculous and the natural order.

It was taken for granted that the Messiah would perform miracles, as so many others had done. So many others, the prophets, Elijah and Elisha, that Simon the Magician of whom the Acts tell us,[2] and Apollonius of Tyana, whose biography has been preserved for us by Philostratus, and the Alexandrian philosophers, Plotinus, etc.[3] It was even supposed that the power of working miracles was not unknown to other rabbis who lived at the same time as Jesus; the latter also made miraculous cures. Jesus himself alludes to these when, having been accused of casting out devils by the power of evil, he replies to his accusers: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by

fectly natural the miracles that were believed to have preceded, at Jerusalem, the war with the Romans and the siege that followed. He does not question these signs and wonders which to-day make us smile: the apparition of a star in the form of a sword, a cow giving birth to a lamb in the Temple, the bronze gates opening of themselves, the spectres of devils, the aerial chariots and armed battalions dashing through the clouds, etc., etc. (Cf. Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, Book III, Chap. VIII).

[2] Acts viii, 9.

[3] Cf. RENAN, op. cit., pp. 260-261.

whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges."[4]

§ 1. THE EXPLANATIONS

With these preliminary facts in mind, let us attempt to approach more closely the miracles of Jesus Christ. At all times they have engrossed the attention of readers of the gospels. Regarded formerly as proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus, they used to constitute for believers the greatest supports of their faith; people found in reading the account of them the greatest edification. To-day they produce upon us the contrary effect. For many they constitute an obstacle to faith; others find them a sort of dead weight which they do not know how to dispose of. Hence the various attempts to explain them which may be grouped roughly under three heads.

1. First there is the *rationalistic explanation* which seeks to account for all the miracles as natural. Certain theologians, for instance, have reduced the cases of the healing of the sick to various cures which Jesus accomplished with very simple medical means. Some go so far as to maintain that he was never separated from his doctor's bag and carried it about with him everywhere. They have removed the mystery from all the other miracles also. Thus the multiplication of the loaves was simply the result of the good will of the multitude which, having pooled its provisions, found, to its great surprise, that it was sufficiently well supplied, etc., etc.

2. The *mythical explanation,* advanced by Strauss, who sees in the miracles of the New Testament simply memories of those of the Old, exploited by the faith of the first Christian community. The Messiah was obliged to perform

[4] Matt. xii, 27.

as wonderful things as the heroes of the Old Testament had performed. Moses, for example, had miraculously provided food and drink for his people. Elijah had raised the dead. As much, therefore, had to be attributed to the Messiah, and the miracles were born as if by enchantment.

3. The *symbolical explanation* attempts to find in the miracle a simple story told in images, a sort of parable which Jesus related and which was later in some way materialised, transformed into a real occurrence. Thus the multiplication of the loaves was originally a story recounting how Jesus had fed the multitude with his words alone. In time this was materialised, and the distorted story ended by becoming a miracle.

We cannot ignore these explanations because they are insufficient; they undoubtedly contain useful elements with which we must reckon. All three of them, however, make the initial mistake of regarding the miracle as a derogation of the natural laws, whereas, in the sense in which the contemporaries of Jesus understood it, the miracle may easily have contained natural elements carried to the height of the miraculous thanks to the mystery concealed in every personal presence of a very lofty nature, side by side with other elements which we are not yet perhaps in a position to understand.

For my part, I believe it is a mistake to try to find a single explanation for all the miracles. Under this term have been united occurrences in the life of Jesus and personal acts of his so different from one another as to have, as it were, nothing in common but their extraordinary character. To handle the matter rightly, we should take them one by one and study them successively. As this method of procedure would take too long, let us at least attempt to group them in classes. Of these I distinguish three:

1. The *healings*, or miracles performed on persons.

2. The miraculous acts which seem to bear upon objects, but of which the *moral import* can be grasped.

3. The miracles of which, at present at least, we cannot discern the moral meaning.

§ 2. THE HEALINGS

Jesus performed a large number of miraculous healings: of this, if we are to believe the gospels, there can be no doubt. An extremely interesting study, however, might be made of the conditions under which these cures were performed.

It is to be observed first that there were certain occasions on which Jesus was unable to perform miracles. This was the case, we are told, at Nazareth, where the incredulity of his fellow-townsmen raised an insurmountable barrier against him.[5]

On the other hand, Jesus adopted the belief which was current among the people around him that sickness was, for the most part, the work of devils; thus in working a cure he believed that he was casting out the devil. But it is also important to note that he did not always cast out devils in the same manner, following, for instance, a ritualistic formula; his procedure was by no means that of the vulgar exorcists. On the contrary, each case was treated, as it were, according to a psychic pedagogy whose methods varied. With one he would begin by "forgiving his sins"; he would command another to perform some definite act, such as "Stretch forth thy hand," or "Arise and walk!" Upon others still he operated himself, for example putting spittle on their eyes.

In all this he certainly followed no prearranged method; he worked by an inspired intuition which helped him to

[5] Matt. xiii, 58.—Mark vi, 5-6.

find the path to his neighbour's soul. It is none the less true that several of these processes correspond to those which the most advanced neurologists and psychiatrists prescribe to-day for the treatment of neuroses and mental maladies. It is not, as a matter of fact, upon ailments and external symptoms that the latter, in our day, set to work first; they seek out the roots of the malady in the innermost recesses of the being; they push their investigations into the subconscious of the patient to find the germs of his illness. When this has been done, they reveal the patient to himself, as it were, and the cure takes place through the relief experienced by the neurotic in understanding himself, in being delivered from the chains that have bound him inwardly, in expelling from himself the false ego which has supplanted the true one. Jesus did these things without the experimental science of the modern psycho-analysts, but there is no need to suppose that he did them in any different fashion. It was the influence of a stronger, better-balanced personality that acted upon these sick people, and this not in despite of all natural laws, but rather through a perfect accord with the laws of the psychology which we are now beginning to understand and which at the time were totally unknown, though they were none the less operative for that.

We see, in fact, in the sick of the time of Jesus, the same hesitations and the same enthusiasms which modern patients manifest towards their physicians. For example, there is the curious phenomenon of *transference* of which the psycho-analysts speak; this is just what we find in the objurgations of the demoniacs who say to Jesus, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" They transfer to the healer the feelings of hatred which they have cherished for others, before they realise that it is upon a part of their own "I,"

upon the demoniac portion of their own personality, that this hatred ought to be accumulated in order to destroy it.

We might multiply these comparisons, showing, for example, that the confidence of the patient in his healer is one of the conditions, and the most important of the conditions, of any possible cure. Jesus aroused this confidence, and it was only upon those who gave it to him that he was able to lavish his grace.

Thus in the miracles of this type we find nothing but the influence exercised in the most natural way upon the ill-balanced and the neurotic by an exceptionally strong and psychically well-balanced personality. What constitutes the miracle is, chiefly and simply, the personality of Jesus itself, the fact that he possessed the personality which he did possess. There was evidently something unique in this: it was, as the gospels show us, the intuition which his extraordinary sympathy gave him into the sorrows of others and the faculty of penetrating to the depths of the souls of those who approached him with the minimum of confession. Here the mystery lies, not in any force contrary to the laws of nature that overturned the order of the natural forces.

The Healing of the Gadarene.—An example of these miraculous cures will help us to understand them better. Let us take that of the demoniac of Gadara, cited by the three synoptics.[6]

We observe at once a difference in the accounts of the evangelists who relate this event. The briefest, that of Matthew, mentions two demoniacs, while Mark and Luke speak of only one, one who says, however, that he is called "legion," thus indicating that he feels that he is the abode of several demoniacal personalities.

"It is amazing," wrote Strauss, years ago, "how much time the harmonists have wasted in their miserable attempts to show that Mark and Luke mentioned only one man because this one

[6] Matt. viii, 28-34.—Mark v, 1-20.—Luke viii, 26-39.

was especially distinguished by his violence, whereas Matthew mentioned two because he included the keeper charged with watching over the madman, the dispute ending in a decision to admit that there is an actual difference between the two accounts." [7] Strauss protests later against the preference which many theologians have accorded to the accounts of Mark and Luke over that of Matthew, showing that the multiplicity of *devils* which appears in the former had become in the latter a multiplicity of *demoniacs*. But the knowledge we now possess of these curious cases of double personality renders the supposition that Strauss disputed sufficiently acceptable and more plausible, perhaps, than it was in his time.

When he adds, "It is permissible to say, by an inverse process of reasoning, that Matthew's account, which is closer to the fact and which speaks of several possessed men and several devils, does not lay sufficient emphasis on that which is especially extraordinary and which we find in the accounts of the other two, the fact that several devils should have inhabitated a single individual,"—we can no longer follow Strauss. As a matter of fact, it would be stranger to see two madmen living together than to encounter a demoniac who believed that he was the abode and the prey of several devils. Thus the priority of the accounts of Mark and Luke seems to us more probable, and the confusion of the multiplicity of the devils with that of the demoniacs admissible enough.

Here, then, we find ourselves face to face with one of those strange cases of neuroses with which the psychiatrists have often dealt.[8]

[7] STRAUSS, *Vie de Jésus,* French trans. by Littré. Paris, 1864, vol. II, p. 30.

[8] Cf., among others: MESNET, ERN., *De l'automatisme de la mémoire,* Paris, 1874.
DYCE, *The Zoist,* vol. IV, p. 158.
Proceedings of the Society of Psych. Research, VII, pp. 221-258; XIV, pp. 396-398; I, p. 552.
Annales médico-psychol. Jan. 1892.
BORIS SIDIS, *The Psychology of Suggestion: A Research into the Subconscious Nature of Man and Society.* New York, 1898.
BORIS SIDIS and GOODHART, *Multiple Personality.* London, 1905.
JAMES, W., *Principles of Psychology,* I, pp. 381-384.
AZAM, *Hypnotisme, Double conscience,* etc. Paris, 1887.
JANET, *L'Automatisme psychologique,* 4 ed. Paris, 1903.
CAMUSET, *Annales médico-psychol.* 1882, p. 75.
VOISIN, *Archives de Neurologie,* Sept. 1885.

Strauss also points out a divergence, a contradiction even, between the accounts which render them open to suspicion. "According to Matthew, the possessed, on catching sight of Jesus, cry out, 'What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' According to Luke, the demoniac falls at the feet of Jesus and entreats him, 'I beseech thee, torment me not!' Finally, according to Mark, he runs to Jesus, falls on his knees and implores him in the name of God not to torment him." [9] What does Strauss make of these contradictions? He criticises the interpreters "who, taking Mark as a point of departure, must themselves admit that there is something contradictory about the haste of a demoniac in throwing himself at the feet of Jesus, whom he nevertheless fears." [10] Now to any one who is at all familiar with psycho-analytic cures, or has even read the accounts of some of these cures, there is nothing incomprehensible in this contradictory behaviour of the sick man. It is a shining manifestation of the *ambivalence* [11] of which the psycho-analysts have

Morton Prince, *Dissociation of a Personality.* New York, 1906.

Mason, R. O., *Duplex Personality; its Relation to Hypnotism and to Lucidity,* Journal of the Amer. Medic. Ass., 30 Nov. 1895.

Myers, F. W. H., *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death.* London and Bombay, 1907, ch. II.

Flournoy, Th., *Esprits et Médiums.* Geneva and Paris, 1911.

Id., *Des Indes à la planète Mars.* Geneva and Paris, 1909.

[9] Strauss, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

[10] Id., ibid.

[11] The psycho-analysts have made us aware of the fact that there always exists in us a double current of contradictory feelings. In relation to the same object our inner self reacts always and at the same time in two opposite ways, and this gives rise to two series of contradictory feelings. Thus when we love some one passionately, there is also, in the subconscious depths of our being, a current of hatred for him. *Crimes of passion* furnish us with a typical example of this. "How much does one have to love a woman in order to kill her?" one might ask.

This phenomenon is also perceptible in our common everyday life. Let us examine it for a moment and try to form some idea of it. We are leaving a gathering of friends who are particularly dear to us. Hardly have we crossed the threshold when, if there are several of us, we begin to criticise and perhaps censure these friends; in any case we make unkind comparisons or bring up various points in their behaviour towards us which we have not noticed before. We say things about them that we would never say to their faces; oh, not malicious things, but still things that are more or less disagreeable. And if some scruple restrains us from saying them, at least we think them, which is exactly the same thing. What is the cause of this phe-

often spoken and which appears so frequently in cases of transference, in which the patient, attached to his physician, hates and adores him by turns and concentrates upon his person all the violence of the feelings which agitate him in relation to quite

nomenon? It is simply that the current of hatred, which has been arrested by all the social constraints of the drawing-room, is liberated in the street. This is a natural phenomenon, revealing in its way what Bleuler has called the *ambivalence of the feelings,* and Silberer their *bipolarity.*

The phenomenon of *jealousy* also illustrates very clearly this persistence in us of two opposite currents of feeling in connection with the same person. As a rule, we have no suspicion of this in ourselves, for the simple reason that, while one of these currents is quite conscious, the other is flowing in the depths of the subliminal. Some accidental circumstance is necessary to bring it to light, but it exists none the less.

Jones, in a study of the painter, *Andrea del Sarto,* tells how this artist married while young a woman whom he adored, but who was far from being on the level of his genius. According to Jones, it appears that he must have had reason to consider her as an obstacle in his life; nevertheless he loved her and chose her as the model for all the madonnas he painted. But the subconscious current of hatred manifests itself in one of his great paintings. Unintentionally perhaps, he painted on the pedestal of the celebrated *Madonna of the Harpies,* precisely those harpies which are the symbol of evil. It is a vengeance of the subconscious. His wife had set him at variance with all his friends; she was a busy-body and she had imposed upon him, under his own roof, the whole of her own family. Subconsciously, he had every reason to hate her; but, to repeat, consciously he loved her. His brush betrayed his inner self, and not once only, for among the draperies which cover the knees of another madonna for which his wife was the model we can distinguish again the figure of a harpy.

All this is interesting; we might multiply examples. But nothing can take the place of the study of oneself. If we face frankly that multiple and delicate life of the feelings which is in ourselves, we shall soon subscribe, I think, to this idea of the *ambivalence of the feelings.* You are very fond of your friend X; you feel for him an inalterable tenderness, an old affection. Then why, just when he has won a brilliant success, have you felt, in the midst of your pleasure, a sort of secret discomfort? Why have you said to yourself that this success is very fortunate, but that, after all, people are carrying their admiration rather far? It is because, while you love your friend, you hate at the same time the rival which he is for you. There we have the ambivalence! I shall certainly not do you the wrong of believing that you give your consent to these sorry feelings. But do they not exist, dissembled but rampant, in yourself? That is the whole question.

We were astonished to learn from several German newspapers, immediately after the invasion of the north of France, that the Germans loved the French, or at least had a certain sympathy for them. We must not cry out in horror at this: it is one more manifestation of ambivalence, of the bipolarity of the feelings; for if there was an ele-

other individualities, with whom he momentarily and subconsciously identifies him.[12]

It may not be possible, with the aid merely of our three accounts, to reconstitute exactly all the details of the scene. But we feel how much this ambivalence of the feelings of the demoniac and the contradictory nature of the conduct which arose from it struck the spectators who later recounted the events as best they could, and as they believed they remembered them.

Concerning the healing itself there is not much to say. We see Jesus trying to effect the dissociation between the false I of this man and his real I by commanding the devil to come forth. This was his usual procedure, and it must be admitted that it strangely resembles that of the modern psycho-analysts who, having discovered by recourse to his dreams and to analysis the borrowed personality of the patient, reveal it to him simply so that he may abjure it.

Resistance often takes place. This occurs in the case of the demoniac in question. Jesus attempts to overcome it by making an appeal to the real personality which consists in asking for his name. But here again the resistance simply braces itself and the unconscious profits by the occasion to affirm itself. Instead of telling his real name, the man replies by assuming a borrowed name on which is inscribed symbolically the very abnormality of his condition, his multiple personality. He declares that he is called *Legion.*

Then, as it appears, Jesus profited by a question of the sufferer himself, caught on the wing, in order to carry out his design and

ment of conscious hypocrisy in this affirmation, there was also perhaps more subconscious sincerity than we wish to believe.

Cf. on ambivalence: BLEULER, *Das autistische Denken,* pp. 39 Jahrbuch f. psychoanal. Forschungen IV.—ID., *Ambivalenz,* Universität Zürich. Festgabe zur Einweihung der Neubauten, 18 April, 1914, III, pp. 93-106.

[12] Cf. on transference (*Uebertragung*), FREUD, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre,* pp. 104.—FERENZCI, *Introjektion und Uebertragung,* Jahrbuch f. psychoanal. Forschung, I, pp. 422—JUNG, *Versuch einer Darstellung der psychoanalyt. Theorie.* Ibid. V.—PFISTER, *Die psychoanal. Methode.* Leipzig, Klinkhardt. 1913, pp. 394 et seqq.—ID., *Was bietet die Psychanalyse dem Erzieher?* Leipzig, Klinkhardt, pp. 89.—ID., *Wahrheit und Schönheit in der Psychanalyse.* Zürich, Rascher, 1918, pp. 135.—See also p. 250 et seqq. of the present volume.

bring about the delayed dissociation. What happened was that the demoniac "besought him much," as Mark tells us, "that he would not send them [the devils] away out of the country." "They besought him," says Luke, "that he would not command them to go out into the deep." "The devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them" (Mark). "And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them" (Luke). "And he suffered them" (Mark and Luke).

Jesus evidently saw in this prayer the salvation of the man who was not able to separate himself from his devil. He gave his permission. It is quite natural that at this moment the demoniac, pursuing his idea, prey as he was to a violent emotion and still identifying himself with his legion, should have turned towards the herd to enter into them and should thus have frightened them. Hence the panic, hurling the swine into the lake. In the sight of them vanishing, drowned, the man had lost his legion along with them; it was at last dissociated from him. His devil, his devils were drowned with the swine and, like the swine, in the lake.

The explanation is of course too simple for people to have found it at once.[13] It has even been conjectured that the swine were precipitated into the lake by the storm that had burst during the crossing of Jesus and before he disembarked, and that, wishing to heal the demoniac, he himself or one of his followers convinced the man that the demons had already entered into the swine and had dashed into the lake.[14] As for Strauss, he sees in the episode of the swine an addition to the legend intended to serve as a proof of the actual expulsion of devils. It is a fact that such conjurors as Eleazar (cited by Josephus), Apollonius of Tyana, etc., in order to convince those who came to consult them as to the reality of the expulsion of devils, would cause the devil as he came forth to overturn some nearby object, a vase full of water (Eleazar), for example, or a statue (Apollonius). It was necessary for Jesus also to have this proof, and the devil cast the herd of swine into the sea.

All this, we must confess, is rather pitiable. The scene, as

[13] NEANDER comes close to it (cf. STRAUSS, op. cit., p. 41).
[14] The hypothesis of KRUG (cf. STRAUSS, op. cit., pp. 41-42).

a matter of fact, is quite natural just as we have described it. A few details, perhaps, such as Mark's enumeration of two thousand swine, may be particularisations added after the event. But the episode as a whole has the most striking air of truth, and our modern studies of neuroses cast a new light upon several of its features which we might formerly have supposed were invented. This shows that we must not be in too great haste to reject everything in the gospels that we do not clearly understand, and that great patience is necessary in this connection.

§ 3. MIRACLES OF WHICH THE MORAL IMPORT IS OBVIOUS

The second category of miracles of which we have to speak here is much more difficult to study. It comprises, in fact, events of which it is sometimes far from easy to reconstitute the exact unfolding and the complete development. They made a very lively impression on the minds of the multitude or of the disciples; and those who were present when they occurred saw miracles in them.

The difficult thing to ascertain exactly, however, is the extent to which their emotion and their lack of what we to-day call the critical sense may have prevented them from distinguishing the physical facts from the moral facts that stirred them. These miracles, as we follow the drift of the accounts, appear to consist in a display of unknown and consequently divine forces that have a direct influence upon matter. But was this always really the case? However it may be, we must remember that for those who were present at these occurrences such distinctions were very vague, that for them the spiritual readily translated itself into the material, that they did not experience the same difficulty that we do in objectifying into a material fact whatever happened to stir their psychic faculties.

Here, of course, we are dealing with one of the most marked characteristics of simple, uncultivated minds; they

project into external phenomena the intensity and the colour of the emotion that has agitated them. We know with what caution the testimony given in the law-courts must be regarded: the witnesses often imagine that they have seen things which have never happened at all. This is because they transpose into physical facts the moral emotion that has pervaded them at the moment of a crime, for example, or some other scene that has greatly moved them. We must bear this in mind while examining the miracles of which we are speaking.

On the other hand, it is also important to notice that Jesus always refused when people asked him for *signs,* that is for miracles that were simply miracles, for thaumaturgy.[15] He was unwilling to give any sign but the sign of Jonas going to the Ninevites who repented at his preaching, that is a purely moral sign—or rather the sort of signs that any one can find in nature and that have their parallels in the life of the Spirit (See Matthew xvi, 1-4).[16] Thus Jesus seems to have had a veritable aversion to performing miracles. Those which he did perform he did not regard as miracles, in the *magical sense of the word,* but rather as a bringing into play for the benefit of others of the inner and divine forces that he possessed. We have a right, therefore, to challenge any report in which the miracle appears to have no practical, moral utility. Miracles of this kind seem to indicate, when we take into consideration the position of Jesus himself, an alteration of the events by

[15] Cf. Mark viii, 11; Luke xi, 29-30.

[16] The text Matthew xii, 38-40, presents what is evidently an alteration of the thought of Jesus resulting from the influence of the surrounding mentality. The allusion to the three days and the three nights in the belly of the whale does not appear in Luke xi, 29-30, where the person of Jonas is taken as a *sign* because the Ninevites repented at his word and not at all because he passed three days in the belly of a sea-monster. We see from this example how the meaning of the words of Jesus was occasionally misunderstood and unconsciously modified by those who heard them or by the first generation that followed them.

witnesses who misunderstood them or understood them incompletely. In order to make this clear, let us choose as an example one of the miracles that we may regard as the best attested in the gospels since we find it narrated in all of our four sources: that of the multiplication of the loaves.

The multiplication of the loaves.—This scene is related by Matthew (xiv, 13-21), Mark (vi, 30-34), Luke (ix, 10-17), and John (vi, 1-15). It is all the more striking since it was at this time that one of the turning-points in the life of Christ occurred. Immediately after it, in fact, we see the multitude beginning to abandon him, and he even asks his disciples if they are going to leave him.[17] This miracle thus resulted in a sort of sifting and sorting of the followers of Jesus; it transformed his activity as a popular orator who was beloved and followed, as a leader of the multitude, into an activity that was more limited and that was henceforth to be directed towards a deeper work. What took place, then, on that memorable day?

John (vi, 14), we observe, is the only one who pronounces the word *miracle;* the others confine themselves to relating the facts. Now the facts are these: a multitude of more than five thousand persons, Jesus anxious not to send all these people away hungry, only five loaves and two fishes with which to feed them. After Jesus has made every one sit down and has pronounced the blessing and distributed the five loaves and the two fishes, it is found that they are all satisfied, and they carry away twelve baskets full of fragments that remain. The impression of abundance and repletion succeeds the first impression that had prevailed of dearth and distress.

The first idea that occurs to us upon reading this account, and it certainly seems to have been that of the redactors, is that Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes. There is nothing to prevent those who have a ready faith from accepting the miracle in these terms and without going further. Yet it must be observed that questions arise in connection with it. We know nothing of any laws by which a sudden multiplication of this kind could take place. "The direct intervention of God," people reply. So it appears, but God has hardly accustomed us to in-

[17] John vi, 67.

terventions of this sort, even in the life of Jesus. He did not make him known by means of miracles; on the contrary, Jesus had to win through human labour and human suffering his credentials to humanity.

Pursuing this line, moreover, we cannot but connect the multiplication with the first temptation of Jesus. He had been tempted, we remember, to make bread out of stones, and he had refused to do so. It is true that the question then was one of feeding himself and that here it was a question of feeding others. But let us consider the circumstances. This multitude had been fasting for a day; but is it as terrible as all that to go a day without eating? Can we imagine that Jesus, who recommended holding the flesh in check, would have kept his pity and his mercy for a case, let us say it frankly, as futile as this? If it was merely a question of corporal hunger, is it not easier to suppose that he would have simply sent them all away till the next day? We are thus confronted here with something that is not easily explained; a sort of mystery broods over this episode. Some question of bread there was, of course; no doubt there was a meal, and a material meal. But was nothing involved besides this? And was it really in this that the true miracle consisted? That, it seems to me, is the question we have a right to ask.

Nor is this the only question; others follow. If we consult John, who is so much more penetrating than the others as regards the inner life, whose eye is so much more expert in grasping the mysterious threads in the life of his Master, we find that on the day after the multiplication of the loaves, the multitude again began to search for Jesus and that when he met them he stopped them with these words: "Ye seek me, not because ye *saw the miracles,* but because ye did *eat of the loaves,* and were filled. Labour not for *the meat which perisheth,* but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."[18] Jesus himself thus seems to feel the need of throwing light upon an action of his own which has been misinterpreted. It is not the "meat which perisheth" that matters in the multiplication of the loaves; it is something else which the witnesses have not understood. And this beginning is merely the prologue to a long discussion

[18] John vi, 26-27.

in which Jesus finally reveals to them that he is himself the *bread of life* and says to them such *hard* [19] words that they turn their backs on him for good and all. These words are that they must "eat his flesh and drink his blood," [20] all this from the spiritual point of view,[21] in order to have eternal life.

For my part, I see in this discourse simply a clearer, more direct, more emphatic explanation of the sense that Jesus himself attributed to the scene which had taken place the day before. They had not understood him. The multitude, roused to such enthusiasm that they had wanted to make him king but from which he had stolen away, had not grasped the deep meaning of what he had performed there. The proof is that when he explains himself better there is a complete revulsion of feeling, and every one abandons him.

Hence, according to Jesus himself, the so-called scene of the multiplication of the loaves was misunderstood by the multitude. Those who were present laid stress upon what was of secondary importance and disregarded what was essential. And what was essential was a miracle that related to the person of Christ himself: the miracle of this very personality which was at that moment, for them, spiritual food. Quite secondary was the bread which they had eaten. Granted that they had been given loaves: in one way or another (and here we can return to the rationalistic explanation that the good will of all supplied the lack of a few), in one way or another every one's hunger had been appeased, and there were some fragments left. But the miracle did not consist in this, and Jesus grieves because they have seen the bread only and not the miracle.

In what, then, did the miracle consist? Here, it must be admitted, lies a mystery which the faith of Christians should seek to interpret. Perhaps it was entirely in the emotion that made this multitude hang for hours upon the lips of Christ, in the spiritual bond that established, between himself and these men, that living, vibrant communion in which their souls mingled. It was an unforgettable moment, this, in which the Master appeared as what he was to the charmed and astonished eyes of the spectators; they felt in him the Messiah and the Son of

[19] John vi, 60.
[20] *Ibid.*, 53-56.
[21] *Ibid.*, 63-64.

God, and they rested in the security and the hope that came from him. They were appeased not by the bread only, but also by the divine words that fell from his lips.

But impressions of this kind do not last long with those who do not deliberately cherish them. A day had not passed before the multitude had ceased to think of anything but the bread. Their spiritual impressions had been materialised and congealed into expressions of a purely corporeal miracle, and they no longer saw in the Messiah who had just been holding them under the charm of his words anything but a man who could give them bread again whenever it was necessary.

Thus what is important in the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves is, to repeat, and as in the healings, *the person of Jesus,* the psychic specificity of this person and the sort of action that it exercised over others. This is the great miracle which one finds under all the material garments that tradition has superadded to it; this is the living germ about which the whole legend has gathered.

We have not the leisure to undertake here a similar study in connection with every miracle in the gospels. I should like, however, to say one word more, which will necessarily be too brief, on the subject of *the resurrections of the dead* that Jesus performed: that of the son of the widow of Nain, that of Lazarus, that of the daughter of Jairus.

What are we to think of these miracles? A preliminary remark, which seems to me fairly decisive: supposing that Jesus had the power to raise the dead, why, we are impelled to ask, did he choose to raise some and not all? There is an injustice in this, when we stop to think of it, that would have horrified one like Jesus. And again, if we are to believe that he raised all the dead of whom he had knowledge, how are we to explain the fact that he was not immediately taken for a god and adored as such? A man who could feel himself in possession of such a power and not exercise it on all occasions, whatever the consequences, would appear a monster of egoism. It seems to me aston-

ishing that this argument, simple as it is, has not been more often advanced. We cannot imagine Jesus, the Jesus we know, realising that he was the master of death in this world and not undertaking a crusade against it.

A second consideration must be added to this. How does it happen that we are told nothing about the later fate of those who were resuscitated in this way? Did they live long lives? Were they obliged to pass through death a second time? In that case, was their lot enviable? Should we not feel rather pity than envy for people who, thanks to the mercy of Christ, were called upon to pass twice through that dark gate? These are all questions indeed, and more serious from a moral point of view than they may appear.

A third consideration, finally, is that we must take into account here again the facility with which legends are formed through the simple accentuation of a few details of the reality. In the cases in question the death may not have been real; it may have been an apparent death or lethargy. What makes us incline to this hypothesis is the fact that at least one of the stories of resurrections, that of the *daughter of Jairus*,[22] shows evidences of the passage of history into legend. This story is usually offered us as that of a resurrection; the death of the young girl is announced by those who come to inform Jairus: "Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?" [23] And it appears indeed as if the evangelists subscribed to this affirmation and accepted it as true. But Jesus, on reaching the house, affirms just the contrary: "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth," [24] and he awakens her from her sleep. Thus, by the testimony of Christ him-

[22] Matt. ix, 18-26; Mark v, 21-43; Luke viii, 40-56.
[23] Mark v, 35; Luke viii, 49.—Matthew represents Jairus as coming at once to find Jesus because his daughter is dead (Matt. ix, 18).
[24] Matt. ix, 24; Mark v, 39; Luke viii, 52.

self, there is no question of a resurrection here; and yet, in spite of the clearness of the text, many pastors still preach on this passage as if a resurrection were involved in it.

It might be possible to see in the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, and even in that of Lazarus, analogous facts of which the sense was later obscured. We shall not go to the lengths of some theologians who see, in the case of Lazarus, a pious fraud arranged between Jesus and the sisters of the dead man; nevertheless we seem to discern, in the exclamation of Jesus at the moment when the tomb is opened, rather the granting of a prayer than a resurrection. Lazarus is alive; Jesus sees it, and he thanks God that he is alive. He does not bring him back to life; he causes to come forth from the tomb one whom they have believed dead and whose life he has asked of God.

From these various observations, the incompleteness of which I do not conceal from myself, and which ought to be taken up again and considered in detail in each case, there yet rises the following hypothesis which I should like to develop a little, without wishing to imply that it is the only one possible:

The fewness of the resurrections of the dead which the evangelists report leads us to believe that Jesus did not raise all the dead whom he saw. It is to be remarked, on the other hand, that we are never told of any failure on the part of Christ, any attempt at resuscitation, in which he did not succeed. It seems improbable, therefore, that Jesus undertook a resuscitation on every occasion when he heard of a death. When he did so, however, when he approached a death-bed or a tomb, it was invariably with the assurance and the kind of assurance that gives to those who understand such things the power to struggle in prayer and the triumph of having their prayers granted. This is

very noticeable in the account of the raising of Lazarus. In that of the daughter of Jairus, one finds in Jesus that particular accent which moral certitude assumes when it has been acquired after a short withdrawal in prayer.

To attempt to penetrate into this aspect of the psychology of Jesus would be hardy indeed; we can only do so by the aid of analogies, and unfortunately we lack precise testimony regarding the certitude and the kind of certitude that is felt by those who, while they are praying and before they have actually seen the fulfilment, know that their prayers are granted. This subject calls for a study which has already been begun but which is still far from being complete.[25] In particular, one might compare the case of those who in praying are aware in advance of the success or failure of their prayer, with those curious cases of *premonition or telepathy* in which, at times vaguely and at other times in the most precise manner, certain individuals, endowed with mediumistic qualities, realise that "something" expected or dreaded is about to happen. It seems then as if tenuous threads were woven between the

[25] Cf. Segond, J., *La prière, essai de psychologie religieuse.* Paris, Alcan, 1911, pp. 364.

Ostermann, R., *Contribution à l'étude expérimentale de la prière chrétienne* (thesis). Geneva, 1907, pp. 101.

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Fosdick, H. E., *The Meaning of Prayer.* London, Stud. Christ. Movement, 1916, pp. 196.

Heiler, Fr., *Das Gebet, eine religionsgeschichtliche unr religionspsychologische Untersuchung.* 2nd. ed. München, Reinhardt, 1920, 558 pp.

expectant soul and the reality that is coming, big with still invisible events.[26] This is not quite the same thing as prophetic foretelling; it is a sort of presentiment that the possible is realisable, that it is going to be realised, that it is already potentially realised, the feeling of a dynamic co-operation which is at work on the very line of the desire or the apprehension of the praying or awaiting individual. These psychic processes, which are still wrapped in mystery, place us on the track of a possible but still unknown communication between the individual soul and what we may call the forces that lead the world. Interpreted religiously, and particularly in relation to the question of prayer, they suggest a communication with the Beyond which surpasses the limits of the conscious personality. With most men this communication remains vague and as it were stunted. When it manifests itself spasmodically, it often assumes an abnormal and agonising character; as a rule, there are mingled with it more or less morbid phenomena that agitate us.

In Jesus, who, in this sense, was a religious genius, we have seen that the *life with the Father* assumed a character of peaceful and normal reality such as is not to be found in any one else. The communion with this "greater than ourselves" did not appear to him as anything exceptional and terrifying, but rather as the immutable, paternal source out of which flowed at every instant his own personal and visible life. He must have caught delicate nuances where we can see nothing but a stormy and shadowy mystery. In him there was a realised harmony between the subconscious depths in which God speaks and the clear reasoning consciousness.

Bearing in mind this fact, which remains to be defined

[26] Cf. MYERS, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death.* London and Bombay, 1907.

and analysed, I arrive at the conclusion that Jesus must have felt, more deeply than we and in a much clearer way, that the fulfilment was present, that the reality was going to respond to the desire. And to speak more particularly of the resuscitations, he must have felt, in certain cases, that a personal intervention was necessary, and that the life was throbbing just beyond. We know too little about what life and death are to solve the question. In what degree is death complete? Is it a resurrection when, by artificial respiration, we bring a drowned person back to life? Jesus himself, in any case, did not concern himself with these questions. When he felt impelled to intervene, he did intervene, with full confidence in the inwardly realised strength of the Father who had sent him, but he did not always intervene, and he never intervened when death had taken place too long before.[27]

The hypothesis which I think we have a right to form is, then, that Jesus only raised the dead *under certain conditions,* and not always; that these conditions were not revealed to him by any external study of the case, such as we should make, but that the impulse took possession of him imperatively when these conditions were present. He felt their efficacy, without being conscious of it, felt it as a *paternal grant,* since, to a degree which is unknown to us, his inner self was in communication with the forces of life that are at work in the world.

We refuse, therefore, to see in Jesus the unfeeling demigod of whom some people have formed an image and who,

[27] The four days that Lazarus passed in the tomb are reduced to three by our present method of reckoning. There is no reason to suppose that Jesus ever attempted to resuscitate persons who had been dead for a considerable period. Why, unless because certain conditions, such as the decomposition of the body, opposed this and because Jesus was aware of these conditions and submitted intuitively and instinctively to them? When it was night for him he did not walk (John xi, 10).

in possession of a discretionary power over life and death, chose a few striking cases for the purpose of showing his power, while he coldly allowed the rest of his contemporaries to die. Rather, far rather, we see in him the compassionate Saviour who shed the tears of a friend over the grief of the two sisters of Bethany, the submissive Son of the Father, hoping everything of the Father, and going, when he had obtained his leave, to give consolation where it was possible to give consolation, where God had permitted life and given an assurance of it.

Here no more than elsewhere, then, do we deny the miraculous. We bow before the divine mystery which, through Jesus, descended into the hearts of men. All that we are opposing is the *magically miraculous,* this and the magician into which people have tried to turn Jesus; we oppose that unworthy, that lamentable counterfeit of the ineffable things which, through him, the Father has communicated and continues to communicate to those who follow the paths, not of charlatanism, but of the moral conscience.

§ 4. MIRACLES OF WHICH THE MORAL MEANING IS DIFFICULT TO GRASP

We shall not linger long over this class of miracles, of which some of the circumstances are unknown to us and the edifying significance remains veiled. Such, for example, are the episode of the marriage at Cana and that of the cursed fig-tree.

This latter anecdote, in which Jesus says to a fig-tree upon which he has found no fruit, and this at a season when figs are not ripe, "Let no fruit grown on thee henceforward for ever," is most curious and disconcerting.[28] Perhaps the thing to do here would be to employ the sym-

[28] Matt. xxi, 18-22; Mark xi, 13-19.

bolistic method and ask whether we are not confronted with a parable uttered on some occasion by Jesus and transformed later, owing to some confusion, into a narration of facts. This is the more plausible since the parable exists in the text of Luke (xiii, 6-9), or at least a parable resembling it, while Matthew (xxiv, 32) attributes to Jesus a saying which makes the fig-tree the symbol of the approaching advent of the Messiah. It would thus be quite natural that on another occasion, chancing to find a barren fig-tree, he should have compared it to the withering of those who lack faith and cannot see the signs of the times. The disciples, misinterpreting his severe words, might have supposed that the reprimand was addressed to the fig-tree itself, just as, on another occasion, they thought that the words of the Master about the "leaven of the Pharisees" were a reproach addressed to them because they had forgotten to bring the bread for the journey they were making.[29]

As for the marriage at Cana, I confess I can make little of it. Was it a simple gift which Jesus made to a family of whom he was fond and which was later transformed and embellished by the legend? Shall we discover some day a definite meaning in this event, a meaning that now escapes us? We must be able to suspend our judgment and wait patiently. Wisdom does not always consist in answering questions. Here it must be admitted that perplexity is permissible.

What conclusion are we to draw from this rapid examination of a few miracles, an examination that must obviously be carried much further into detail? On the whole, it leads us back, as does the study of the teaching of Christ, to the *moral personality of Jesus*. At bottom, it is in himself, in his presence, in his activity that the great miracle

[29] Cf. Mark viii, 14-18.

lies. The impression which he produced upon his hearers personally is at the centre of all these accounts in which, beneath the physical marvels, there is always concealed a profound and decisive psychic action. Whatever extraordinary things the witnesses saw in this unique life they saw because they were impressed in an even more extraordinary manner in their inner selves; this disturbance of their whole ego communicated itself, as it always does, to their senses and coloured the physical reality with the hues of the moral and psychic universe which was suddenly revealed to them. The truth of Man, the human truth, seized upon them suddenly and revealed God to them as close beside them. The grip of this unexpected revelation transformed the world in their eyes, and the new reality took on for them that touch of the marvellous which is called the miraculous.

It does not diminish these things to attempt to see them in their inwardness. The false glory that we have been accustomed to see in them may be a little tarnished perhaps, but the real gold they contain only shines the more splendidly. After all, it is life alone that matters; and the activity of Jesus had but this one end, to bring new lives to birth. Of this miracle, incessantly repeated, we perceive in the accounts that we have studied the exterior echo and as it were the fugitive reflection in the world of the senses.

CHAPTER VI

THE TRANSFIGURATION

The scene of the Transfiguration occupies a place apart in the life of Jesus. It cannot be considered as on the same plane as the miracles, since it is an example, as Strauss very justly observes, of a miracle performed *in* Jesus and not *by* him. It is related to the others, however, by the external character of the marvellous which it bears. What are we to think of it?

Three explanations of it have been given.

1. The *mythical explanation,* advanced particularly by Strauss, but also accepted by other theologians, Weisse, Keim, etc. The scene was a pure invention put together in the image of the traditional statements of the Old Testament in order to place Jesus in the direct line of tradition and show him as fulfilling it.

2. Others see in it the account of a *dream* of the disciples, or of one of them; this is the opinion of Neander.

3. Finally, it has been thought that the Transfiguration was a simple *vision* granted to the apostles in order to strengthen their faith. That had been the idea of Tertullian; later it was shared by Herder, then by Reuss and Weiss.

There is probably an element of truth in each of these opinions. The mistake comes as a rule from trying to reduce things to a theory and thus unify them all.

There are three points to be considered in the story which the first three evangelists have handed down to us: [1] the

[1] Matt. xvii, 1-13; Mark ix, 2-13; Luke ix, 28-36.

radiance or the glory of Christ, the *apparition* of the two personages, the *voice* that came out of the cloud.

First, however, let us locate the event. If we are to accept the general opinion, it took place at a most important moment in the life of Jesus. It was shortly after the scene at Cæsarea Philippi when Peter, questioned by the Master, permitted to escape from his heart that confession which was so full of enthusiasm and conviction: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." [2] Jesus had trembled with spiritual joy upon hearing these words which, for him, were the proof of a result that was henceforth assured. His apostles had at last recognised him and embraced him; they were on solid ground; they believed. In the face of this faithful little group whom he had definitely won there was the mounting opposition. Jesus realised whither it was tending; he knew that nothing could stop it in its sinister work, and he told his own followers of the sufferings, the passion that awaited him. It was at this psychological moment that the scene of the Transfiguration took place.

But in opposition to this a new idea has been advanced by the recent works of Wrede, namely, that the Transfiguration took place not after but before the scene at Cæsarea Philippi. As a matter of fact, the accounts given by Mark, in Chapters VI to IX, present the greatest confusion, and it would be more easily explicable if the scene at Cæsarea Philippi were a consequence of that of the Transfiguration and of the revelation which the disciples (and especially Peter) had had there, in a moment of ecstasy, of the Messiahship of Jesus. If this were so we should also be able to understand more clearly the reply of Jesus to Peter's confession, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Jesus had not intended

[2] Matt. xvi, 13-28; Mark viii, 27-32; Luke ix, 18-22.

to say that he was the Messiah; he had even forbidden his disciples to do so as they descended from the mount of the Transfiguration. But Peter had broken the prohibition. Whatever we are to think on this point, it does not in any way alter the psychological situation. On the one hand, Jesus was aware of the sufferings that were in store for him, and on the other he saw himself loved and believed in by his followers. His own state of mind was the same, whether the confession of Peter had taken place before the Transfiguration or whether it had not yet been openly uttered. And we can easily imagine what this state of mind was. Jesus was confronted with these two realities: on the one hand, the success of his message among his own followers, the growing conviction in their hearts which corroborated his own conviction, and on the other the hostile attitude of the majority of the people and their leaders, the evident rejection of his message on the part of the official authorities, and consequently the certainty of imminent sufferings and perhaps the death which was indeed awaiting him.

How can we doubt that at this moment he felt the need of retirement and solitude on the heights in the great silence of the mountain? On one side he had received a sovereign consecration from On High, the seal that had been placed upon his work by the Father in the faith of the humble whom he loved and to whom he had given himself; on the other, a cloudy and threatening future was emerging over the nearby horizon. Under such conditions the hours of introversion, of a return upon oneself, assume a keen and poignant character which readily gives birth to ecstasy.

Now, on the mountain Jesus is in prayer. And it is while he is praying that the disciples, awakened suddenly, see him shining with an unaccustomed light. "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light"

(Matt.). "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mark). "The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening" (Luke). Beneath these expressions, which, since they do not exactly agree, we are not obliged to take literally, we must note the impression experienced by the disciples. Aroused from sleep, in that state in which our waking life is scarcely to be distinguished from our dreams, they suddenly see their Master in ecstasy, and the brilliance, the splendour of his face and person strike them acutely.

Strauss recalls here the story of Moses, of whom we are told that "the skin of his face shone" because he had talked with God,[8] and he concludes from this that the Transfiguration is simply a mythical creation. Strauss was quite right in thinking of Moses, but his mistake lay in limiting his inquiry to the Israelitish past; he should have prolonged it into the history that followed the Christian era. Moses is not the only man of whom we are told that his face shone when he talked with God. What is the source, for instance, of the aureole which primitive painting places about the heads of the saints? Of the crown of rays with which the heads of certain gods are adorned? Is it not told somewhere of Saint Francis of Assisi that his disciples used to look through the key-hole of his cell when the saint was in prayer in order to catch a glimpse of the marvellous radiance of his ecstatic countenance?

The phenomenon is therefore not unique. We speak every day of faces "lighted up by intense emotion." We have only to carry this to the sublime and remember that Jesus was Jesus; then, if we allow for the exaggerations of language and the uncertainty of the impressions of men who have just emerged from sleep, what will remain is the

[8] Exodus xxxiv, 29 and 35.

splendid vision that was granted to these men, the vision of Christ in prayer, in the imposing silence of the mountain. They were present perhaps at the moment, of all moments the most solemn, when Jesus, fully conscious of the two currents that heightened his existence and swept it along—the triumphant love of the Father which gave him courage, and his tragic rejection by the world which was leading him to his death—accepted them both, united and reconciled them in a submission that was also a triumph. He was, at that instant, one with the Father; he drank deep of the spring of love from On High, and his countenance reflected this infinite ecstasy.[4]

But all at once the scene changes. One gains the impression from the accounts themselves that something sudden

[4] When modern theologians, referring to the prevailing eschatology, speak of the predictions of his death which Jesus made after this scene and distinguish between a *dogmatic* necessity for this death which Jesus felt and a *historico-empirical* necessity which he did not feel (SCHWEITZER, op. cit., p. 439) they show to what a point of psychological blindness purely historical conceptions can lead. It is plain that Jesus was greatly influenced by the eschatological conceptions of his times and by the image that Isaiah called up of the Messiah dying alone for others. But how little one must know about the nature of great souls and the struggles of flesh and blood to believe that Jesus could have coolly faced the necessity of dying as the prophets had predicted if no other historical or existing facts, no concrete reality, had pointed to the same thing! These ideas are not of the sort one accepts so easily when one is a living man! Jesus had been familiar with them for a long time, but he had not applied them literally to himself. It was when he heard the Father's call, in events, on the one hand, and on the other in his obligation, that he joined the two ends of the chain: messianic prophecy and death. The Transfiguration took place perhaps at this moment, a moment that was solemn and tragic above all others. Plainly, as Schweitzer says, he might have returned to Galilee and found once more a sympathetic multitude there instead of going up to Jerusalem. But from the fact that he did not do so, is it necessary to infer a *dogmatic* will to die? May we not suppose that in a soul such as that of Jesus there existed a tormenting desire to win over his people in the person of their leaders and that he had reached a time when he could no longer be morally contented with a peaceful, tranquil ministry in the Galilean countryside? The problem is, in any case, of quite a different moral, psychological and religious order and is much vaster than the theologians imagine, hypnotised as they are by the *eschatological solution* which they have substituted for the *exegetical solution.*

and unexpected has taken place. Jesus is no longer alone, and he is no longer in prayer. Two personages have appeared and he is talking with them. In actuality things do not happen in this way. We see people coming before they arrive. On the other hand, a prayer is not succeeded by conversation without intermediate phases; people are surprised, they are disturbed when they are interrupted in their prayers; they rise, they change their attitude.

The absence of any transition in the story, without any indication that the narrators are aware of the deficiency, seems to show that, as a matter of fact, they had no suspicion that two scenes had taken place. This might mean simply that the disciples, "heavy with sleep," as Luke says they were, and striving to keep awake, saw the second part of the scene in that *state of half-dreaming* in which one still perceives the sensations that reach one from without, but perceives them in a changed shape, causing them to enter as constituent elements into the dream, which continues.[5] Of Moses and Elias the apostles have just been thinking; they are the forerunners of the Messiah, and it is precisely with the messiahship of their Master that their minds have been filled during the preceding days. It is, at the moment, the subconscious web which underlies all the events of their conscious life. This ruling thought of the messiahship has attracted to itself and grouped about it everything that is associated with it in their subconscious, including the images of Moses and Elias. How can it astonish us that, in the half-dream which immediately follows the brief vision of the Transfigured Master, they should see him flanked by the two personages whom every good Jew associated intimately with the glorious Messiah,

[5] In connection with this state and the so-called *hypnagogical* and *hypnopompical* visions which characterise it, see MYERS, *Human Personality*. London, 1907, p. 96.

and that they should awake with a start to see them disappearing in the cloud that floated about them?

This explanation is corroborated by the incident that follows. We observe that as they descend the mountain the disciples ask Jesus this question: "Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" [6] Evidently they have no very distinct impression of having actually seen Elias; there is an uncertainty in their minds as to what they have witnessed.

As for Jesus, he replies that Elias has already come and that they have known him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed; and from his allusions, the disciples understand that he is speaking to them of John the Baptist, that he is likening John the Baptist to Elias, who was to return before the coming of the Messiah.[7] But at this moment, Jesus does not even mention the immediately preceding apparition of Elias which is involved in the story of the Transfiguration, thus showing plainly that he has not seen this apparition. It is difficult to understand how, if he had participated in the vision of the apostles, he could have failed to connect or to distinguish between the two facts of the presence of the prophet Elias on the mountain at the moment of the Transfiguration and the identity of Elias and John the Baptist. If the expected Elias is John the Baptist, who is it then that has just appeared? There is here a *quid pro quo* so enormous that Jesus could not but have felt the necessity of dissipating it. And as he is not conscious of it, he cannot have seen what the disciples believed they saw. The apparition of Elias has been a vision of the apostles alone; and Jesus, in answering them, leads them into a line of ideas that is entirely different from their own because he is not aware of what

[6] Matt. xvii, 10; Mark ix, 11.
[7] Matt. xvii, 11-13; Mark ix, 12-13.

they have just seen. Still quivering with their intense, superstitious emotion, the apostles speak of the heavenly Elias who has been there but an instant before. For Jesus, on the contrary, the expected Elias is not an ancient prophet come down from heaven, but simply John the Baptist. There is no common measure between the two conceptions.

It remains to speak of the voice which is heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." [8] Three times in the gospels a voice rings out and bears witness in favour of Christ: at the moment of the Baptism, at the moment when Jesus declares to the Greeks who have had Philip present them to him, that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone," [9] and after the Transfiguration. Now, it is to be noted that, on all these three occasions, Jesus happens to be in a morally analogous situation: on one side there is a strong solicitation to act, a call in the direction of ministry and service, a summons to life and a promise of life, and on the other a renunciation, a call to humiliation, an expectant sense of the sufferings that lie before him. On all three occasions he accepts the continuation of the service that carries with it the joy of success and the sufferings together, and he unites this joy and these sufferings in a tragic embrace in which life surmounts every antithesis. While, however, at the time of the Baptism and in the pericope John xii, it appears that the voice is heard by Christ alone, on this occasion it is heard by the disciples; it is, as it were, a testimony perceptible to the others.

If we are to suppose that the word of God is not something external but a silent witness which man interprets under the form of a voice (and it certainly seems as if we must so regard it) then we must conclude that, in that

[8] Matt. xvii, 5; Mark ix, 7; Luke ix, 35.
[9] John xii, 28.

unforgettable moment when they saw Jesus in prayer, the disciples caught, in the radiance of his features and his glance, an irrefutable testimony to what he was. As never before, they felt that he was the son of God; they felt God saying to them, "This is my son!" just as we sometimes feel, in an hour of communion with an elevated and tenderly loved soul, a sort of testimony rising from the depths of life that consecrates the esteem and veneration we feel for this soul, gives our feelings the stamp of truth and sanctions them, so to speak, in our own eyes. These divine consecrations occur that mark the life of our affections and give them their full value. To one who met Jesus along the roads of the world, it would have been impossible not to experience them; and with what power must they have affected those who loved him and followed him so closely!

The Transfiguration appears to us, then, as a capital moment in the life of Christ: the moment in which, having attained to a full consciousness of the two great movements that swept his earthly existence along (the conquest of hearts, the resistance of the world), and having experienced their violence and discerned what their end would be, he accepted them both and consecrated himself, entirely and anew, in a supreme act of affirmation, to the gift of himself in love. In an instant of ecstasy, after the experiences of an already advanced ministry, and without abandoning anything that he had undertaken, he had, so to speak, renewed, in the arms of the Father, his pledge of service to humanity.

The disciples, profoundly moved by the announcement he had made to them of his sufferings, or by what they half divined about them, overborne by fatigue and emotion, disturbed in their half-slumber by these new and vivid impressions, saw Jesus, as if in a flash of lightning, at the highest moment of this consecration in which he was offer-

ing himself entirely. This spectacle, mingling with the associations of traditional ideas which the subconscious caused to spring up in the state of half-sleep in which they were plunged, composed the scene that has been handed down to us, in which the marvellous borders on the sublime. Perhaps the miracle is to be found not so much where people have sought it as in the sublimity of the person of Jesus himself; and the terror which the disciples felt was that of the sacred hour that had been passed in the midst of them and that had been but half revealed to them. It left them with a firmer conviction, with an unlimited trust, no doubt, in this mysterious "greater" being who was now descending with them to the inhabited regions where men suffer and die.

CHAPTER VII

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

We have attempted to indicate the scope of the teaching and activity of Jesus, what he wished to do and how he accomplished it, disregarding, as far as possible, everything that is commonly known about him and applying ourselves rather to pointing out what constitutes the originality of his doctrine and his personality. It was difficult, in these conditions, to adopt a strictly historical scheme and give a conspectus of the gradual development through his life of his ideas and teaching. It is obvious that Jesus lived in too close a contact with reality, whether spiritual or external, not to have taken the stamp of life. He accepted the education which the Father gives men through the continual cross-action of inner experience and external facts; he did not shrink from the upward struggle that every well-lived life implies and imposes. It should be possible, therefore, to discover an evolution in the ideas of Jesus during the course of his career, by which we mean not that there was any indecision in regard to the goal which he pursued, but that his aims underwent a successive and progressive definition, that he had an ever clearer and more conscious grasp of his own significance, of his task and of the rôle of his personality. It would be interesting to follow him from this point of view through the years of his ministry. Others have done this. We cannot linger over it.

Gathering together all the data we have acquired, we should like to take up now the problem of the *personality of Christ himself*. What did he desire to be? What was

he? In short, what is it that constitutes the very basis and originality of his personality, what the Germans call his *Selbstbewusstsein,* his consciousness of himself? In order to understand him we must return to some of the points on which we have already touched and attempt to carry further, or rather deeper, the lines that we have traced.

Professor Bousset of Göttingen has attacked this problem.[1] He begins by stating it as a fact that Jesus did indeed wish to be the Messiah of his people. Even if some of the passages on which one has to rely to sustain this opinion present difficulties from the critical point of view, we are still at a loss to understand how the Christian community could have arrived at this conclusion after the Resurrection unless something in the words and the teaching of Jesus had led them to it. At the end of his life, in any case, Jesus certainly wished to make his entry into Jerusalem as the Messiah, and he was condemned as a false Messiah. The inscription that Pontius Pilate caused to be fastened upon the cross corroborates this. It bore the words, "Jesus, King of the Jews."

From what moment are we to date this consciousness of his Messiahship? There is general agreement in admitting that he referred to it openly to his disciples, enjoining them to silence, after the scene at Cæsarea Philippi when Peter made his celebrated confession, "Thou art the Messiah, the son of the living God." But in the light of what we have said on the subject of the Baptism and the Temptation, it seems clear that Jesus, in some sense or other, felt that he was the Messiah and the son of God from the very beginning of his public career.

How are we to reconcile this tardy revelation of his rôle

[1] See in his *Jesus,* in the collection of *Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher,* the final chapter entitled "The Secret of the Personality."

and his conviction to his disciples with the relatively precocious knowledge which he had of his Messiahship? It is here that Bousset seems to me to have laid his finger on the critical spot. "We can only find the reply [to this question]," he says, "in one direction. Jesus himself was confronted here with an insurmountable inner difficulty. He was dominated by a profound and immediate sense of *the inadequacy of the title of Messiah* to express what he was in the depths of his own consciousness. The idea of the Messiah forms a part of the national hope and the national religion of Judaism. The popular Jewish hope looked for a king sent by God and of the race of David who, as a powerful chief with sword in hand, would smite the Gentiles, annihilate Rome, proclaim his dominion over the world at Jerusalem, and then, upheld by the spirit of God, reign henceforth with wisdom and gentleness over the faithful and the submissive Gentiles. Even when this king was conceived as super-terrestrial, and people no longer expected a Messiah who would be the son of David, but thought of him as a miraculous being coming from the heavens as a judge of the world and clad in a divine dignity, he still remained the national king who was to destroy the Gentiles. How foreign was this form of hope, permeated throughout with a passionate national fanaticism, to the inner being and the nature of Jesus! . . .[2] The title of Messiah thus became a danger if it was allowed to stand for the expression of his inner being, his deepest personality."

Why then, it will be asked, did he not reject this messianic idea altogether? Bousset answers: "Because it was

[2] It may be remarked here that the desire to respond to the national hope in its existing form constituted one of the temptations of Christ. Rejected at the outset, it must have accompanied him and incessantly renewed itself in his contact with a people that frankly looked for this Messiah and could not understand him otherwise than in this form.

necessary on another side, namely, if he wished to make himself understood by his people. He felt that he was more than a prophet; he felt in himself the pressure of something extraordinary and unique; he had come to announce the approaching kingdom of God. And according to the popular conceptions, this advent was unthinkable without the Messiah; his place was thus appointed. Jesus could not be content with the rôle of a forerunner. He felt himself in a proximity to God the Father such as no one, either before or after him, has known. He was aware that he was pronouncing the ultimate and decisive word; he was the fulfilment, and no one was coming after him. The certitude and the power of his activity, the radiant splendour, the clarity and the freshness of his whole being rested on this foundation. One cannot separate this superprophetic consciousness, this consciousness of being the one who has come to fulfil, from the image of his person without compromising it. And when Jesus wished to bring this consciousness into the light, to bring it to certitude, when he wished to give it expression and form, the only avenue that lay open before him in his environment was the idea of the Messiah, the apparition of the king who fulfils at the end of time.

"Thus the idea of the Messiah was for Jesus the only possible form of his consciousness, and yet an incomplete form, a necessity, and a heavy yoke as well, under which he walked silently almost to the end of his life; a testimony giving to him the inward secret of his being which, at the same time, surrounded him with insoluble external difficulties." [3]

If Jesus wished to be the Messiah, then, it was not *for the sake of being the Messiah,* but because it was the only means of presenting himself personally to his people in such

[3] The italics are ours.

a way that the people would give him their attention or take any interest in him, the only means, consequently, by which he could be useful to them.

One of the consecrated messianic titles enabled him immediately to define what he wished to bring, and this was the one he chose: *the Son of Man.* This expression comes in the prophetic line from Ezekiel and in the apocalyptic line from Daniel, and it was not by chance that Jesus adopted it in preference to others. The Son of Man, while designating the messianic dignity, expressed something else as well. The Son of Man is Man, man preëminently. And this, preëminently again, was what Jesus wanted to bring to his followers. He wanted to communicate to them the human verity in order to bring them the divine verity; he wanted to make them see *man as he should be,* as he himself had realised the conception, to make them witnesses of a perfect human experience, since this was the only means by which they could find out what God was and understand him.

The further he progressed in this task of revelation, which consisted in presenting himself in the sincerity of his moral stature, the more Jesus, giving himself, met with human resistance. He saw it growing all about him, embodying itself in the authorities who were opposing their own will to that of God. This resistance became so strong and it resorted to such means that the cross soon took shape on the horizon as inevitable. The giving of himself implied the necessity of going on, even unto death. He was obliged, in order to communicate to others that which formed the basis of life, to submit to losing his own life. We shall see later what this last experience of the Messiah was. For the moment, it is upon his experience of life that I should like to dwell, asking once more, Who was Jesus? What was this central experience which for him

constituted life so completely that his only aim, the only possible meaning of his existence, consisted in revealing it to men, his brothers, and in rendering them participants in it?

This experience he summed up in one word, the *Father*. Jesus, we may say, had discovered in the depths of himself what God was. It was an attitude of his whole being which he summed up in this way, his natural attitude, that which ought to be the attitude of all humanity and which, alas, was not. In receiving, in its plenitude, the influx of life *which made of him a human person*, it was natural for him to say "Father." This vital influx, this inner urge of energy, which Gaston Frommel has called *the moral obligation*, which the psycho-analysts have named the *libido*, Schopenhauer the *will to live*, and Bergson the *élan vital*, Jesus felt, differently no doubt but in the same sense, as the *Father*.[4] And he soon discovered that he felt it in a different way from other men, that his way of feeling it

[4] We may be accused of treating as identical here terms which, in the minds of those who have employed them, have not meant the same thing. There is certainly a contradistinction between *obligation* and *libido*, between *élan vital* and *Father*, between all these finite notions of finite minds, just as there is a difference between the God of Jesus Christ and the God we serve, as there is a difference between the God whom I believe I should follow and the God of my neighbour who is a Catholic or a Freethinker. And yet, in the last analysis, it is the same God in every case, merely grasped in a different and incomplete fashion by each of us. Similarly, there is but a single great reality which animates us all and urges us on towards life; it is only when we attempt to explain it or express it that we give it different and, as sometimes happens, opposite characteristics. Encountering it within ourselves, we each see it differently from the way in which others see it and more or less exactly as it is conditioned by the faults and imperfections of our inner lives. The more depraved we are (and who is not more or less so?) the more there takes place in us a distortion of the forces of life which causes them to follow the path of the brute instincts and necessitates a colossal effort of sublimation. With Jesus it appears that this sublimation was, so to speak, immediate and constant, so that he could hail with the name of "Father" the life-force that sprang up in him.

We advise those who are shocked by our being able to see something *divine* in the force that drives living beings to grow, to unite and to

was the true way, that his attitude was the normal one while that of others was abnormal, since it thrust them outside of life, into aberrations, dreams, and sin. Hence his suffering and at the same time his ardent, imperious desire to save his brothers by giving them the secret of life and causing them to assume his own inner attitude, so that they might feel the paternal power in this vital influx which penetrates the being inwardly.

They were seeking God elsewhere; they must be brought back to the true God, and for this they must be brought into touch with the true humanity in themselves, the true man which each of them is potentially but which they have allowed to become veiled and to be displaced by false images, by the *idols* of humanity. While in others a new birth, a regeneration, is necessary in order that the true attitude may be produced, in him, Jesus, this is natural. He has assumed it from the first. This is what constitutes his originality and consequently his unique vocation. "I and my Father are one," [5] he says, expressing this inner

multiply to reread with fresh eyes the first chapter of Genesis. Who was it, according to the Scriptures themselves, that gave this command to everything that lives upon the earth?

After that, why should we be scandalised by the fact that the psychoanalysts have denominated as the *libido* the essential principle of human nature? Only, to nature must be added supernature; and what must be especially borne in mind is that every one regards the force which he feels quivering at the source of his life *as the initiator of that which properly constitutes the human being in him;* every one names this expanding sheaf of life-forces in accordance with the colour of his philosophy and the relative height of his own thoughts; every one has in himself the image of man that he deserves. For Jesus this inner force clothed itself preëminently in the features of *paternity.*

Let it be admitted that *moral obligation, will to power, will to live, élan vital, libido* are not the same thing. They are photographs, rather, taken by different operators of unequal skill, of one colossal and multiple reality of which one and all succeed in obtaining but a partial image, incomplete and deformed because of the inadequacy of their lenses. Jesus alone caught a full view of this reality which creates both persons and life, and he gave it the one name that seemed fit to him and that we repeat with his warrant: the *Father.*

[5] John x, 30.

unity in such a way as to show that he had felt in his meeting with the Father no sort of shock but rather a paternal embrace. There is a flawless continuity between the Father and himself. Analysing this experience psychologically, we cannot but assign to it a mystical character; it is, in its inmost essence, a *mystical experience.* Thus we may say that the great work of Jesus, the mission of his life, his constant and supreme effort, was to help men to discover the secret of life, by revealing to them that mystical attitude of his own which at every moment brought him face to face, through the Father, with life.

While we cannot call it anything else than mystical in its nature, while it is, from a psychological point of view, a mystical experience, an experience of inner communion, that is, with a Beyond, this attitude differs nevertheless from the phenomena that we are accustomed to find among mystics in general. M. Flournoy commented on this contrast. "There is a striking difference," he observed, "between the mystics and Jesus in regard to the very content of the mystical phenomenon, the kind of Beyond, if I may so express it, which is revealed to them and which they announce to the world on the evidence of their immediate experience. With most of them it is a vague sphere of joy and deliverance (the Buddhist Nirvana) or an infinite and mysterious gulf whence emerge for an instant all finite creatures, only to be at once re-absorbed into it (the One of Pantheism); more rarely, as among the prophets of Israel, who in this are indeed the forerunners of Christ, the object of the mystical revelation is a personal Being, singularly different and remote, however, from ourselves (the Eternal, He that exists through Himself). Jesus is the first to find in the depths of his own consciousness this concrete Beyond, living, palpitating with love and holy will, whose intimate, personal Presence, at once august and

familiar, like that of another self or a Great Companion of a superior essence, could not, it seemed to him, be better expressed in terrestrial language than by the word 'Father.' This term, finally, summing up as it does in itself the whole religion of Christ—since he proclaims in a single word the love of God and human brotherhood—expresses excellently at the same time that perfect fusion of the moral and the mystical elements which makes of Jesus the unsurpassable type, the perfected personification of the religious genius." [6]

It is only since the publication of that admirable little book by Th. Flournoy, *Le Génie religieux,* that psycho-analysis has begun to be talked about among ourselves. And this is to be regretted, for what might not its learned author have added to what he tells us regarding Jesus's idea of the "Father" if, at the time, he had possessed the works of the psycho-analysts on the *Œdipus-complex* and particularly on the *paternal imago?* We cannot hope to make up for this, but let us at least add one or two words on the subject.

The psycho-analysts have shown us the immense rôle that is played by the Œdipus-complex in early childhood and the place that is held in the psychic life of the child by the persons of the father and the mother upon whom come to be concentrated all the child's most vivid feelings. Following this they have revealed to us the echo of these first impressions in the psychic life of the grown man, in his psychic aberrations (the neuroses), and again in his literary or poetic, moral and religious conceptions. One cannot help being struck by the equally important, though quite different, rôle played by the notion of the father, the paternal concept, the paternal imago, both in psycho-analysis and in the religion of Christ. The connection

[6] Flournoy, Th., *Le Génie religieux,* Association chrétienne suisse d'étudiants, 1904, pp. 47; cf. pp. 9-10.

forces itself upon us. May not this connection furnish us at least with some light on the nature of the central experience of Jesus?

It will be understood that I only venture with hesitation upon this slippery ground, and that I wish merely to indicate a few lines of comparison that may aid us.

What rôle, what sort of rôle, have the psycho-analysts discovered in this figure of the father, this paternal imago, first in the life of the child, and afterwards in that of the adult? They have found that the most intense emotions that stir the child's soul attach themselves with great force to this symbolic figure of the father. And they have also found that the most contradictory feelings immediately attach themselves to it as to their natural object, so that for the child the father is at once the object of the greatest *hatred* and of the greatest *love*. It seems so natural for the child to love its father; this harmonises so well with our ordinary views of duty and life that we scarcely notice the feelings of affection which the child has for its father. All this belongs in the picture, it is appropriate; it does not attract our attention because it does not shock us. It is another matter when we speak of the hatred of the child for its father. We are immediately filled with a feeling of disapproval, of revolt, a sense of unsuitability. When we have referred in our lectures to this hatred of the child for its father the resistance has instantly made itself felt in the protestations of the audience: the latter tell us, in all good faith, that on the contrary in their own children they have observed a natural tendency to seek the father, to enjoy being in his arms, to wish to have him near them even in preference to the mother. There is nothing impossible in this, nor does it in any way invalidate the psycho-analytic thesis. On the contrary, that mothers especially observe in their children feelings of affection, a

loving inclination, for their father simply arises from the fact that these sentiments fall in quite naturally with our ways of thinking and the whole orientation of our moral life. As we observe more closely, however, focussing our interest if need be on what is displeasing to us morally, we shall also discern in our children the opposite current.

This double direction of feeling—love and hatred—with respect to the same object, in this case the father, has been called by the psycho-analysts *the ambivalence of the feelings*.[7] The infantile life is characterised by a very strong ambivalence of the feelings; and since the figure of the father is one of the most marked objects of interest in the life of the child, it is with respect to him that this ambivalence is most clearly manifested. The child loves his father and hates him at the same time. I do not insist upon fine distinctions. Hatred and love must be taken here in a very broad sense; these expressions cover a whole gamut of feelings that are still undeveloped, still in the embryonic state. The child is a man only *in posse;* he is only a potential man; he neither loves nor hates perfectly; the primitive feelings that move him are as yet undifferentiated. He is still, so to speak, in the purely unmoral stage of the emotional life. Hence the fact that we do not judge severely these impulsive manifestations which are characteristic of the very young child; they leave us quite undisturbed when they do not make us smile.

There exists, none the less, in this complete unmorality of the natural ambivalence of the feelings in the child what might be described as a prophetic call to sacrifice. Let me explain: we who judge life morally, who are morally developed beings, are bound, when we turn to consider the future of our children, to judge their unmorality as immoral. We say to ourselves that one of their tendencies

[7] See, on ambivalence, p. 210 (note).

of feeling must be sacrificed for the benefit of the other. The whole effort of education tends in this direction. The natural ambivalence of the feelings must be surmounted in some fashion in order that the child may attain to unity, to the unification of the personality, to moral equilibrium.

Now, this education is not always successful. In neurotics, for example, we have types with whom, from this point of view, education has failed. The double current of contradictory feelings has subsisted; one of them, hatred, has been repressed, but it remains at work in the subconscious and is not slow in bringing about disaster. In order to cure these neuroses we have to bring this latent hatred up from the depths of the subconscious into the light and make the patient understand that it is not his father who must die, but the false representations of the father which he has himself formed. In a word, the patient's powers of sacrifice must be directed towards a part of his life which has developed wrongly and has remained outside the control of his consciousness and his reason.[8] This mistake persisted in the patient when the child was becoming a man; the ambivalence was not surmounted.

In the normal individual this is not the case. Normally the mere play of life should effect a sublimation of the primitive infantile tendencies. The ambivalence of the feelings then gives place to a progressive unification. But how does this unification occur? It occurs through what I might call a *differentiation of the object of the feelings,* in this case the *father,* and it occurs in this way. The paternal *imago* divides, so to speak, in two. On one side are the false or evil representations that the child has made of the father, on the other the true representations which correspond to the reality. The hatred is directed against the false representations of the father and finally

[8] See the example quoted on pp. 120 et seqq.

destroys them; the love attaches itself to the true father, to the true image of the father (and, by extension, to the whole of humanity whose ideal relations with the child are symbolised by those of the father with him), and delights in it.

Now how far are we normal in this respect, we individuals who consider ourselves perfectly healthy in mind and body? We may well ask the question. If we observe ourselves closely, especially if we allow our inner life to be observed by a more impartial third person, by having ourselves psycho-analysed, we shall find perhaps that very marked traces of ambivalence still exist in our own feelings; we shall undoubtedly become aware that with our deepest love there is often mingled an unacknowledged fund of rancour, resentment, jealousy that all but perceptibly approaches hatred and may easily become hatred under the sting of the most insignificant happenings.

We certainly love the father; we love the enlarged *paternal imago,* everything in humanity, that is, that touches us paternally; but here again how many reservations we make in which hatred has its innings! The frontiers between peoples, between the classes of society, war, the whole state of modern Europe shows this with a wealth of evidence that leaves nothing to be desired. We only love paternal and fraternal humanity by hating it; we only prove our love for it in the measure in which we hate it. It is by killing that we show ourselves worthy to be called men and brothers, and sons of our grateful country. It certainly cannot be said that ambivalence has been surmounted as yet. This incapacity of superficially Christianised man to abate the original ambivalence of his feelings and make a unity within himself is a humiliating fact, a mark of inferiority and inaptitude for his task that fills us with confusion.

From man in general let us now pass to Jesus, still remembering this notion of the father, this *paternal imago,* and try to see how the problem of the unification of tendencies, the passage from the state of childhood to the state of moral majority, was resolved in him. Here we at once feel ourselves on a new plane, a higher level. In Jesus, in so far as we are able to follow the path of his psychic development (judged rather by its results than through a study of details), it appears as if the ambivalence had been surmounted, or at least had been resolved by a differentiation of the object. Let us recall what we mean by this. We have seen that, with normal individuals, as with neurotics who are on the road to recovery, there occurs, at a certain moment in their life, a sort of division of the notion of the father. On the one hand, the false or inferior representations which the individual has formed of his father are set aside, and the individual, directing his hatred towards them, overthrows them in himself and kills them. What we have here is a sort of consecration of the force of hatred to a noble end, a sublimation of the hatred. On the other hand, the love is concentrated on the real father and on his substitutes, fraternal humanity. In the case of Jesus we observe a similar movement, but how much more perfect and carried how much further! The *paternal imago* divides also, but in a different way, on a higher plane: on one side are the paternal human representations, all humanity considered as a family, the human beings who are his brethren, his mother, his sisters; [9] then, on the other side, is a new paternal imago, unknown before and of a purity and a force of attraction such as are to be found nowhere else, which Jesus calls "the Father," properly speaking, in opposition to all the other paternities. It is upon this spiritual Father, who dominates life with

[9] Matt. xii, 46-50; Mark iii, 31-35; Luke viii, 19-21.

all his divine loftiness and who animates life with all his human intimacy, that the power of Christ's love is concentrated. It is this heavenly Father, attained and recognised in a new and yet old experience, a true experience but one which before Jesus had been merely potential in humanity, had been merely anticipated, so to speak,—it is this Father who is the real Father, it is he who has a right to all the love.

And the hatred, against what is that directed in Jesus? It is directed against all the imperfect representations of the father which concrete reality had furnished hitherto and which veiled from men, without their suspecting it, the life of the veritable Father. Jesus, we remember, uttered this paradoxical saying which has given the exegetists a great deal of trouble: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." [10] Well, here is the solution; we find it along the path of psychological analysis. It signifies this spiritual hatred directed against all the paralysing representations of human relationships that prevent one from going to the true Father.

Jesus realised this saying to the letter. He directed his power of hatred against everything that prevented him from giving himself to the Father; and it was not only domestic obstacles that had to yield before his vocation, his personal existence, to the last point, was obliged to yield also. With him sacrifice was not a matter of evil personal tendencies or false or morbid representations; it involved the whole self so far as it was individual. He understood and felt that one was obliged to "hate one's own life" when it became a hindrance to the realisation of the will of the Father. This annihilating force which is called hatred he

[10] Luke xiv, 26.

permitted to turn decisively against his own life when it became clear to him that for him death was the only issue that could assure to the very last his fidelity to the Father. The paradox that frightens us had become in him a psychically experienced reality. He had hated his own life; he had sacrificed everything that constituted his earthly existence so that he might love the true Father perfectly. I do not know whether we can grasp in its completeness what took place at this moment in that unique personality, but at least we can attempt to understand it. Whereas with us sacrifice is usually prompted by the evil tendencies that have continued to exist in our souls and is directed against these tendencies, in Jesus it seems to have resulted rather from the encounter between an evil external reality and a perfectly pure individual experience of the Father.[11] Jesus did not, as we do, sacrifice a part of his psychic self to another part that ought to live; he sacrificed the whole self, the whole human personality, to the life of Humanity which he felt within him. This was the sublime in sacrifice: it was the individual experience transcending its limits and rising to the height of the collective human experience. Thus one might almost say that Humanity was the question with Jesus, that there was no question of individuality at all; it was the person consecrated to the service of Humanity, the son of man becoming Man *par excellence* because he was more than the son of man, because he was the *son of God.*

At the supreme moment of Gethsemane Jesus was so completely the son of the Father that he was able to sacrifice everything that was individual in him to the realisation of the love of the Father for the children and of the children for the Father. He gave *all that he was* so that

[11] Let us note in passing that in this lies the chief difference between the sacrifice of Jesus and ordinary asceticism or *masochism* (the pleasure found in inflicting pain upon oneself).

in contemplating this gift men might believe in love and realise that there is a Father and that this Father is the supreme reality.

By the light of psycho-analysis we can understand a little better, I believe, what is meant by a sacrifice that is necessary to life and how, in giving oneself, far from destroying life, one furthers it, augments it, liberates it. From this point of view, the sacrifice of Christ no longer appears to us to have those arbitrary features that have been an offence to some people. It follows the very lines of life itself. It accomplishes marvellously, and through an act of the will that has never been surpassed, that which the very tenor and process of our psychic evolution prefigure and seem to announce: the soul's attainment of the true Father by sacrifice and through a partial death.

But at this point there intervened very great difficulties for Jesus himself. Briefly, how was he to make men understand his inner attitude? This difficulty lay not only in the quasi-impossibility of communicating such an experience but also and particularly in the difference which he perceived to exist between his own experience and that of others. With them the opposite inner currents manifested themselves; never did the influx of life arrive pure from the unconscious layers of the being; it was not the Father who was at work within them, but the devil.[12] While with Jesus the entire group of instincts that constitute the *libido* were sublimated in proportion as they penetrated into his consciousness, in other men the strength necessary for this sublimation does not always exist. Thus the harmonious unity does not come about; there are jars, repressions; everything is arrested, qualified, impaired, vitiated. In Jesus the unity is effected between the consciousness and the forces of the unconscious, but the distinction is also marked

[12] John viii, 31-47 and partic. 44.

between that which belongs to himself and the non-ego that is in him: both himself and his Father exist in his experience in a perfect harmony but with a distinction that remains unaltered. With the natural man, on the contrary, there is a confusion between all these subconscious forces that appear to him at one time as if they were all parts of himself, at other times as if they were all alien, dominating, coercive and, in consequence, of a demoniacal and debasing character.

There is a difference in nature between him and ourselves, but not a fundamental difference. He is himself Man; his experience is the true human experience. Men as they are cannot attain this without being born again. Thus henceforth his whole activity, his whole effort of love, his whole testimony will tend to lead them on to this new birth. He will give them his whole life in order to show them how to live as he has lived. But alas! it is too much to ask them to give up the false attitude towards life which they enjoy. In demanding that men should die to themselves, Jesus drew down upon himself the forces of hatred. These invalids transferred their evil passions to him, as if he had been their physician, and he became the object of their hatred.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEATH OF JESUS

We have reached the last chapter in the life of Jesus, that is to say the period in his ministry when the idea of death begins to take shape in his thoughts. It is very difficult to fix the exact date of this. From the outset, no doubt, from the time of the Baptism and the Temptation, the *gift of himself* had appeared to him as the essential act, the central idea of his ministry and his career. But while the gift of oneself is the possibility of death accepted, it is not the same thing as death itself. Is there not a certain difference between the acceptance of every other sacrifice and the supreme acceptance incarnated, as it were, in the glacial, irremissible fact of personal death, accepted, willed, impending?

It seems as if the gospels wished to assign a precise date to this invasion of the mind of Jesus by the idea of death. We see it appearing in the reiterated declarations that Jesus makes to his disciples, when he affirms to them, for instance, that "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." [1] These declarations begin after the scene at Cæsarea Philippi and the confession of Peter. We find them also at the moment that follows the Transfiguration: "And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of Man were risen from the dead." [2] These two events, as we

[1] Mark viii, 31; Matt. xvi, 21; Luke ix, 22 and xxiv, 46.
[2] Mark ix, 9; Matt. xvii, 9.

have observed, almost coincide, or at least follow one another very closely, and opinions differ among the theologians as to the order in which they should be placed.[3] Then, a little later, at the time when Jesus is going up to Jerusalem, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem," he says to them; "and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again." [4]

Such passages, however, just because of their preciseness, should be accepted with caution; for if the disciples had had any such exact warning, how could they have been taken by surprise at the moment when death came or have had so little expectation of the Resurrection? No doubt Jesus had spoken to them on various occasions, probably in veiled and ambiguous terms, of the possibility of his death, and these utterances were later written down and put into a more precise form in the light of subsequent events. They therefore do give us a date, that on which Jesus began to speak of his death to his followers, though not the date, doubtless much earlier, when he began to envisage it as possible in his inner consciousness.

Another passage, regarded as more convincing, is the following: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give his life* a ransom for many." [5] Here, we are told, is to be found an early intimation of an expiatory death. But aside from the fact that the expression "to give his life" does not necessarily imply death, it would be possible to suppose that Jesus attributed to his unmerited sufferings a virtue similar to

[3] See pp. 229-230.
[4] Mark x, 33-34; Matt. xx, 17.
[5] Mark x, 45.

that which Jewish tradition attributed to the sufferings of the brothers martyred in the time of the Maccabees which, according to the popular belief, were to turn aside the wrath of God. Consequently, this passage does not contribute very much to our knowledge.

There remains the Last Supper, the institution of the Last Supper, which does indeed appear to be closely related to the death of Jesus and seems to affirm in advance its unique significance. And yet doubts have arisen in connection with this also. It has been thought, and reasonably thought, that Jesus had no intention of making this last meal a sacrament for later times; it has been asked whether the emphasis later laid upon the bread and the wine as representing the broken body and the shed blood was not falsified or exaggerated; and whether Jesus had not been insisting here again rather on life than on death, on that living bread and that living blood upon which Christians should nourish themselves.

However this may be, and whatever may be the value of the different passages we have just examined, we cannot but observe, in any case, and whether we wish to do so or not, that the feelings and especially the intellectual certitudes they presuppose in Jesus are in flagrant contradiction to the story of his last moments as they are described to us by these same gospels. To make certain of this we have only to reread the scene of Gethsemane, the account of the final moral struggle.[6] What does this show us if not that, even then, on the very eve of the supreme sacrifice, the hope of a possible deliverance still existed in the heart of Jesus? The prayer, full of submission as it is, nevertheless besought for this deliverance, and with what an ardour of the whole being!

Even on the cross itself, it appears that Christ had not

[6] Matt. xxvi, 36-56; Mark xiv, 32-52; Luke xxii, 39-53.

lost the hope of a possible intervention on the Father's part; and does not the cry that one of the evangelists reports as having been the only one which he uttered, the tragic and terrifying cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"[7] does not this cry seem to be the tragic avowal of this last hope which is vanishing? Oh! there are obviously other ways in which it might be interpreted. How far is it not possible to carry interpretation? But when we place ourselves candidly and open-mindedly before this living scene and permit its poignant realism to seize upon our hearts, then we recognise that this cry, modified as the sense of it may seem to be by other words spoken at other times, is a cry of despair, the fearful rending of a heart which, till then, has hoped for an intervention of God that has never come.

Now that we have attempted to clear a little the approach to the sanctuary, let us try to penetrate into the sanctuary itself. The question to be considered for the moment is this: "Did Jesus entirely understand the meaning of his death and why he had to die?"

This question is important because to it is linked a whole manner of regarding Christianity that depreciates the Christian life by making of it a drama that is played in heaven and on earth by mere puppets under the whip of a destiny which is more like the antique *fatum* than the paternal will of the God of Jesus Christ. There are many who think that it was all decreed in advance and that Jesus, actuated by omniscience, knew from birth what he would have to undergo. Having the knowledge, he had the strength, as a matter of course; and the events unrolled as in a drama written by a sanguinary god whose son, disillusioned actor and predestined victim, was condemned to play the principal rôle up to and including death. The

[7] Mark xv, 34.

horror of such a conception is only equalled by its stupidity. For how is it possible that we should be served by a theatrical redemption, played entirely outside the conditions of real human life?

Now this was not the case. What, as a matter of fact, do the texts that we have just passed in review reveal to us? They show us a Christ who became conscious very early of the psychological conditions of the life of a Saviour. Either because of the resistance that he encountered or through his reading of the Old Testament, particularly of Isaiah LIII and the life of Jeremiah, the thought that the death of the Messiah was possible, and even probable, had taken possession of his mind: this thought had so forced itself upon him that it became an anguish and a torment, an evident necessity. He saw that he was to be condemned, that he was doubtless to be put to death. But we know what a difference there is between the *thought of death* and the *reality of death* when it presents itself as inevitable and imminent. Jesus may have finally realised that he had to die, since this was the only issue that the fulfilment of his duty left to him in the precise, the unique circumstances in which he was placed, but did he also understand all the consequences of his death and the reason for it? I do not believe so. To the very end he was submissive in his obedience, but he was submissive in spite of the obscurity of his mind, which did not perceive whither his obedience was leading him.

Jesus was led step by step to his death, and he accepted it through his entire confidence in the Father who was guiding him: he saw, indeed, in the death that was demanded of him, the crowning of the whole moral logic of his life. He had been led thither, and God, in consequence, had made this demand of him. But why? This was the riddle. Jesus did not perceive what we perceive to-day.

He died without knowing it; and that is what constitutes the incomparable grandeur of this death. But he died, confident and morally certain, nevertheless, because he was sure of the Father who had led him thus far. A confidence in the Father that goes to the length of accepting death for oneself, that is the great lesson which he gave to the world; not in theory but in the fulness of life, in the earthly existence of a human person.

Now it is precisely this that men must see, and upon which they must reflect, in order to be able to pass through a *new birth*. They cannot themselves attain this without an inner death, without desiring and accepting the real death of a part of themselves. And men had not dared to take this step; they had not had enough confidence in the hidden energies of the life within them, in the Father who makes his voice heard in the depths of the soul, to hazard this sacrifice. It was necessary for one of them, the purest and most saintly, to show them the road, it was necessary for him to enter entirely into this obscure death . . . without knowing why, through obedience. Jesus took the risk that humanity had seen before it for centuries without daring to brave it. He abandoned himself entirely to the paternal will that breaks and kills and sacrifices, after having abandoned himself to the paternal will that gives life. We needed to see this in order to believe that life is born of death, to know it, to be certain of it. Here again Jesus *fulfilled* what had been in gestation for centuries in the human soul. This is what remains for us to show now.

In a pamphlet of fifty-eight pages which appeared at Leipzig in 1915 under the title *Durch Tod zum Leben* ("Through Death to Life"), Herbert Silberer, one of the most interesting of the psycho-analysts, gathered together an impressive array of documents to show how deeply

rooted in the subconscious layers of the human soul is this theme of "through death to life." He points out the traces of it even among the primitive peoples, among whom a series of ceremonies and initiation rites turn upon this truth that "it is only through death that one attains life," expressing it in all sorts of symbols the meaning of which has sometimes been lost even by those who use them.

In later times, in the secret societies of every type that spring from the bosom of humanity, death is represented as the key to the attainment of a higher life, a new birth. Silberer quotes as examples the Greek and Egyptian devotional institutions, the mysteries of Mithra, the Gnostic cults, the sects that practise baptism, certain philosophical schools of antiquity; in the Middle Ages, the academies of the Renaissance, a series of humanistic societies and orders which had the outward appearance of associations of artists or artisans but of which the principal and secret interest was of a religious nature; then, nearer to ourselves, the societies that arose from these latter companies, the Rosicrucians, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the freemasons who date from 1717, and finally the theosophical or occultist societies of our own epoch which purport to be the custodians of profound secrets.

We cannot enter into circumstantial details, but I should like at least to point out the frequency of these images of the new birth through death, first of all among the *primitive peoples*. Take, for example, the initiation ceremonies which, among many of these peoples, are imposed upon the youths at the moment when they reach manhood, roughly at the moment of puberty. The general features of these rites are as follows: first, the candidate is obliged to remain for a certain time in some dark place, in a hidden place in the forest perhaps; he is then obliged to undergo tests of courage or resolution, and sometimes he is subjected

to the ceremony of a sham murder; [8] after this he is returned to life as a new man, so new that he must be taught again the simplest movements and actions, such as eating, speaking, walking, etc., of which he is supposed to be ignorant. Next his guides teach him the secrets that are not known outside the society of the initiates, and which must never be revealed. He is a new being, he is born anew, this time to the true life, the life of the group of initiates.[9]

In the *Mystery-Religions* we find precisely the same conceptions in a more conscious form, the same instinctive needs of the soul expressing themselves under analogous symbols. There is Attis, represented by the pine, the tree that is always green, which dies and is carried to the tomb in the shadow of the sanctuary; his adepts mutilate them-

[8] Or a partial murder, the removal of a part of the body, the teeth, for example, circumcision, etc.

[9] Cf., on the initiation rites of primitive peoples: Freud, S., *Totem und Tabu.* Leipzig and Vienna, Heller, pp. 149.—Durckheim, Em., *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse; le système totémique en Australie.* Paris, Alcan, 1912, pp. 647.—Toy, C. H., *Introduction to the History of Religions.* Boston, Ginn and Co., no date, pp. 639.—Brinton, D., *Religions of Primitive Peoples.* New York, Putnam, 1897, pp. 264.—Dussaud, R., *Introduction à l'histoire des religions.* Paris, Leroux, 1914, pp. 292.—Junod, H. A., *Zidji, étude de moeurs sud-africaines.* St.-Blaise, 1911, pp. 333.—Id., *The Life of a South African Tribe.* 2 vols., St.-Blaise.—Tylor, Edw., *Primitive Culture,* 2 vols. London, Murray, 1913, 5th ed., pp. 973.—Le Roy, A., *La religion des primitifs.* Paris, Beauchesne, 1911, 3rd ed., pp. 522.—Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia.* London, Macmillan, 1899.—Id., *Northern Tribes of Central Australia,* id., 1904.—Jevons, F. B., *Introduction to the History of Religion.* London, Methuen, 6th ed., 1914, pp. 443.—Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites.* Aberdeen, 1889.—Reinach, S., *Orpheus.*—Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* 2nd ed., III, p. 422.—Crawley, *The Mystic Rose.*—Hastings, art. *Circumcision* in the Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.—Ames, Ed. S., *Psychology of Religious Experience.* London, 1910, part II.—Langloh-Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe.*—Arnoux, P. Al., *Le culte de la Société secrète des Imandwa au Ruandu.* Anthropos VII, 1912.—Peckel, P. G., *Religion und Zauberei auf dem mittlerem New-Meckl. Bismarck-Archipel.* Anthropos I, 3, 1910.—Frobenius, L., *Die Masken und Geheimbünde Africas.* Nova Acta Abh. D. Kaiserl. Leopold-Carol. deutsch Akad. d. Naturforscher LXXIV, 1, 1898, etc.; and the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute.*

selves just as he did, according to the legend, and all but die with him, so as to be born again with him to a new life. There is Mithra, conceived under the image of the sacrificed bull whose regenerating blood, received by the initiates in baptism, makes new beings of them. Many other features of the ceremonies are enumerated in the special works. Everywhere among the Mystery-Religions we find this idea of death as necessary to the new birth.

In studying these ancient cults and these ceremonies, some of which still flourish among contemporary peoples but which represent a past stage of human evolution, one is more and more struck—indeed one cannot fail to be struck—by the incessant reappearance of analogous formulas, images, and concepts all of which lead us back to this theme: "Through and by means of death to life."

As a matter of fact, it is not only in the past that these images recur. We find traces of them everywhere in the present. In the bosom of Christianity they are in full evidence; but we observe them also in movements that have no connection with Christianity or even deny it, such as freemasonry, as well as in the dreams and the visions of neurotics. Everywhere this necessity of a new birth and of death as a condition of it recurs and obtrudes itself as an essential *leitmotif* of the human soul. Fairy-tales, legends, and myths add further weight to the force of this inference; for they are full of the same idea.

The conclusion is inescapable that we have here one of the profoundest traits of the psychology of man. Whence does it come? Why do we find it on all sides? Surely because these antithetic symbols, *death, new birth,* correspond to an inner process which is that of life itself.

The progress of the inner life, of the psychic life of man, is bound up with a necessity by which certain tendencies must die in order that others may be able to develop.

The human being, if he wishes to give the full measure of himself and be equal to the tasks of life, must consent to die, at least in a portion of himself, so as to attain to the full development to which he inwardly and instinctively aspires. This truth, vaguely and as it were subconsciously perceived, has been expressed, from the very dawn of history, in myths, legends, rites, and fairy-tales, that is to say under the varied forms of the symbol. It never became fully conscious, because too many contrary tendencies of our nature imposed an insurmountable barrier against it. We do not want to become aware of what is within us because we are afraid of it. Man allows that which torments him inwardly to escape, as if through a safety-valve, in the form of literary and poetic dreams. Save in a few exceptional cases, he has neither the strength nor the will to see himself as he is and to undertake consciously the life-task that lies before him.

The symbols of the death necessary to attain to a new birth which humanity has presented to itself in its cults and myths had not the power to evoke with sufficient phecision the act of the inner life that must be performed in order for one to be born again. It remained a symbol, a cold dramatisation. The representation was palpably artificial till the day came when a man consummated, in the fulness of human life, the absolute gift of self, realised the death, had the power to obey the forces of life that exalted him to the point of his accepting the death. There was no longer any question of symbols on this occasion. The inner reality was lived through. A man, in the completeness of humanity, had the courage and the requisite plenitude of life to risk his whole personality in the tragic adventure that is called death.

And this was not the dream-death, the death that the mystics mean when they speak of their *night,* of their

absolute ignorance, of *the death of the faculties;* it was not the death of the consciousness turned back upon itself in introversion; it was active death, if I may so describe it, accepted in full reality and in full activity, consciously and deliberately.

Where every one had hesitated to die in part he was willing to give himself entirely. Thenceforward the door stood open and others could follow.

We are now in a position to understand the experience which the disciples obtained from the Resurrection of Christ. Whatever the nature of this latter was, and I shall not discuss that here, they had tasted the life and the triumphant power of him who had died. They saw that death did not destroy life; they had shared this unique experience, which had transformed the world, that to die was to live, since he whom they had seen die thenceforward lived in them.

In this sense, one may say that Jesus had incarnated in his death and in his resurrection an inner experience that had existed potentially for centuries in the human soul but that had never passed beyond the sphere of the dream. *He translated into life the secular dream of the peoples.* Sacrifice unto death is now no longer merely a symbol, it has become an enacted reality; and in this lies the great new fact that has changed the face of the world. Henceforth, to symbolise to themselves the psychic process through which they must pass in order to have life, in order to be born anew, men no longer have merely fairy-tales, dreams, or legendary stories; they have a human life and a human death that have been lived through, if the expression is not too strong. To assist them in working on themselves they have a point of departure and a force that are living and no longer merely imaginary. Something has been realised that was never realised before. Hence-

forth, one can accept death, one can desire one's own death, knowing, since one has beheld it in a historic human being, that this accepted death is not a deceit, that it leads one to the true life, to the sublime and eternal life, that he who gives himself does not die, but lives again in others and with them. This is the psychological meaning and perhaps the *raison d'être* of the death of Jesus. He alone was able to untie the Gordian knot that held the soul captive to itself, and this he did by accomplishing in reality and visibly what man had felt that he ought to accomplish spiritually without ever being able to do so. His very person thus becomes the living symbol of the most inward and decisive psychic act, that of dying to himself and abandoning himself to those forces of the inner life which he felt to be paternal and which he called the Father.

Did he suspect that, without his death, the new birth of which he had spoken so much would have been impossible to the great majority of men? Perhaps he had some intuition of this: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die," he said, "it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." [10] In any case his confidence in the Father, who demanded the supreme sacrifice of him, was not mistaken; it came to a happy issue, and this consists in the number of those who, saved from themselves by an inner death of the demoniacal instincts, follow him, in newness of life, towards the eternal horizons. We must admit that in the course of the history of Christianity this has often been perverted. The great mystics, or at least most of them, have fallen back, through the paths of the inner dream, of *autism,* to a death and a life that have been played rather than realised. The stigmatists, those neurotics who have counterfeited in themselves the suffer-

[10] John xii, 24. This text, it is true, is in the gospel of John. It may be attributable to the experiences of a subsequent generation, though this is not certain. Still, it remains a matter of doubt.

ings of Christ, have been in this the playthings and the victims of a temperament that is incapable of grasping and mastering life. To follow Jesus is not to copy him slavishly in a dream in which one shuts oneself away from the society of men. Rather it is to accept day by day the death which existence inflicts upon living consciences, upon those who at all times desire the will of the Father; it is to reproduce in the midst of life this heroism of Christ's who risked his personality even unto death in the service of the paternal will of which he had experienced the full power in himself. To live, in the Christian sense of the word, is not in fact to become absorbed in the illusory dream that seems to conduct you to the enjoyment of life through the terrors of death. It is, on the contrary, to confront the surrounding reality as it is, a reality that kills uncompromising consciences; it is to desire, in the midst of an earthly and social existence, what the Father desires; that is to say, granting the forces that still rule in this world, to expose oneself to the violence of humanity even to the point, if it is necessary, of receiving death. There lie in wait, for every authentic Christian personality, constant outrages, partial deaths, deprivations that are forced upon one unless one accepts them voluntarily. To him who desires life, in the Christian sense of the word, death is ever close at hand through the very fact that sincerity is at daggers drawn with a world of hypocrisy and violence. To dream the struggle is simply a way of avoiding it. The great introverts have often withdrawn from the reality of the living sacrifice; their very asceticism is sometimes an evasion.

Jesus is greater because he neither willed nor desired a dream-death. He accepted in the simplest fashion the real death which the real life placed before him. It is upon this ground of lived realities that one must follow him in

order to be a Christian. And this is why the Huguenots and the Puritans have been greater saints than all those of the Catholic Church, with the exception perhaps of the Poverello of Assisi. And this is also why we must incessantly defend the form of Christian life which we call *Protestant* as superior to the Roman Catholic form, since it constantly leads life back to the moral ground, dragging it pitilessly away from the easier but baneful derivations of introversion. We suffer sometimes from the apparent dryness of our Protestantism; many people who are fond of poetry reproach us with the austerity which they see in it without distinguishing the far superior moral beauty of which this austerity is the external safeguard. Without setting ourselves against anything that may add grandeur to the Protestant religion, it is important to challenge the ever-active influence that paganism has continued to exercise upon Christianity since the time of the ancient mysteries, the influence which consists in causing the soul to glide comfortably down the slope of dreams away from life, in turning it away from the real life and the real death which are always difficult and tragic, and replacing them with symbolic counterfeits, with a poetic drama the charm of which resides precisely in the fact that one can watch it without taking part in it, and by being present at it imagine oneself living it all without having to make any decision or assume any responsibility. To follow Jesus Christ is not to watch from a distance, as passive spectators, a mystery that is greater and more beautiful than all those that have been played on the world's stage before or since his time; it is to live, with one who has lived and still lives in his followers, a life of which the cross is the constant end and renewal, a conjoined life and death which are essential to the resurrection and alone render it possible.

CHAPTER IX

THE RESURRECTION

It is time now to pass on to the accounts that have been preserved for us of the Resurrection of Jesus, so that we may judge of their value and their import and try at least to determine what facts are buried in them and what place these facts occupy in the psychology of Christian humanity.

The gospels have preserved for us, in connection with the Resurrection of Jesus, the echo of two traditions, the characters of which are at once discernible. According to one of these, the appearances of the resuscitated Jesus took place in Galilee; he exhibited himself under the form of a body which did not seem to be subject to the same laws as our earthly bodies, which did not seem to be the body that Jesus had had on earth before his death. This is the tradition which appears in the gospels of Mark and Matthew and in the apocryphal gospel of Peter. According to the other, which is called the *Judaic* or *Jerusalemite* tradition, as distinguished from the *Galilean* tradition, the apparitions took place in and about Jerusalem. Jesus appeared in his corporeal body just as it had been before his death; he shows his wounds to the apostles, he eats before them, etc. This is the tradition of the gospel of Luke.

In the gospel of John, as is natural considering its relatively later date, the two traditions, the Judaic and the Galilean, are united, though without blending as completely as they are to do in the future. But these are only affirmations; let us look at the facts.

§ 1. THE DOCUMENTS

In Chapter XVI of the *gospel of Mark* we see Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome coming to the sepulchre in which Jesus had been laid to anoint the body. "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" they ask one another. "And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away." A young man, clothed in a white garment, tells them that Jesus has risen and bids them go and tell the disciples that they are to see him in *Galilee*. The conclusion of the chapter, from verse 9, is possibly an addition to the gospel of Mark: it is missing in most of the manuscripts.

In the gospel of *Matthew* (chap. xxviii) we find the same or almost the same account. Instead of three women there are only two here: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary; instead of the young man in white garments there appears an angel who frightens the guard stationed near the tomb. He announces to the women that Jesus is risen and that they shall see him in Galilee. Then, all at once, Jesus himself appears before them, but only to command them to go and tell his brothers to go into Galilee; they are to see him there. Then the eleven disciples "went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them. . . ." [1]

The last development of the Galilean tradition is found in *the apocryphal gospel of Peter*.[2] It says here that on

[1] Matt. xxviii, 16-18.

[2] This gospel of Peter was known only by name before the year 1892 when Bouriant found in Egypt, near Akmim, in the tomb of a monk, a parchment codex which, among other texts, contained about sixty verses of the gospel in question. They are those which relate to the story of the Passion and the Resurrection. The gospel of Peter was known before only through the quotations of Serapion of Antioch

the night of the sabbath, the soldiers who were guarding the tomb heard a great voice out of heaven; they lifted their eyes; the heavens were opened, and two shining angels descended and approached the sepulchre. The stone which served as a door moved aside of itself; the two angels entered, and the soldiers hastened to arouse their captain and the Jewish elders who were with them guarding the tomb and who were asleep. While they were telling them what they had seen, behold, there appeared from the tomb three men: Jesus Christ upheld by the two angels; the cross, which had served in his execution, followed them. The angels were so tall that their heads touched the sky; but Jesus was taller still, and his head rose above the heavens. A voice came down from the sky, saying, "Hast thou preached to those who sleep?" And a reply came from the cross, saying, "Yea." The company ran to relate everything to Pilate. Nevertheless, at dawn, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb with some other women to anoint the body. An angel appeared to them and announced to them the Resurrection, and they fled in fear. The angel had said to them: "He is risen, and he is gone whither he was bidden to go, that is to say, to heaven." [3]

The gospel of Luke [4] exhibits a tradition that is already somewhat different. What do we find here? First, the account of the women at the tomb. The terms of this are about the same as in the first two gospels. Nevertheless, we must point out certain features that are different. The personages who appear are "two men in shining garments." They affirm the Resurrection of Christ. On their return from the tomb the women, three of whom are named (Mary

(Eusebius vi, 12, 3); and Origen. Eusebius, Theodoret and Jerome mention its name only. The work itself must have appeared between the years 130 and 200, we do not know exactly where, perhaps in Syria.

[3] This resumé is quoted from STAPFER, *Jésus-Christ, sa personne, son autorité, son œuvre,* t. III, pp. 236 et seqq.

[4] Luke xxiv.

Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, but there were others also), carry their news to the apostles, but "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." It must be added that, as Luke has it, the women are not informed of the place where the disciples are to see the risen one; no mention is made of Galilee in this connection.

Luke contains also the episode of the disciples at Emmaus. Jesus appears in person to two disciples on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus; he speaks with them without their recognising him. The disciples urge him to remain with them; he consents to do so, and it is only when they are sitting at meat and he breaks the bread that they recognise him. "And he vanished out of their sight."

Returning in haste to Jerusalem, these two disciples find the eleven gathered together, and while they are relating to the latter what they have seen, Jesus appears in the midst of them. They imagine they are seeing a spirit, but Jesus shows them his hands and feet, tells them to handle him and see that he is really himself, with his own flesh and bones, and eats before them the broiled fish and the honeycomb. Then he leads them to Bethany where the Ascension takes place.

Thus, in these accounts of Luke, we have a resurrection of the very body which Jesus had before his death. All the details tend to show that Jesus possesses a material body. He disappears and he reappears, it is true; but he eats, he carries the scars of his wounds; they touch him and recognise the presence of the flesh and the bones. On the other hand, everything takes place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem: at Emmaus, at Jerusalem, and at Bethany.

From the gospel of Luke it would seem that all these appearances occurred on the same day, or during two days

at most. In the book of the Acts, however, Luke is more definite; he states that the apparitions lasted over a period of forty days and that they terminated in the Ascension, which took place on the Mount of Olives.[5]

We are thus clearly in the presence of two different traditions, one of which places the appearances of Jesus in Galilee[6] and gives them a more spiritual character, the other placing them in Judæa and dwelling on their material nature.

In *the gospel of John,*[7] the Galilean tradition and the Jerusalemite tradition are united, which is in keeping, as we have said, with the lateness of this gospel. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene near the sepulchre, where she is weeping. She supposes him to be the gardener until he calls her by her name; then she recognises him, and Jesus bids her go and tell his brethren that he is to ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God. On the evening of the same day, Jesus comes into the midst of the disciples "when the doors were shut" and shows them his hands and his side. Here, then, we have immateriality, since he passes through the doors, and materiality at the same time, since he causes them to examine his wounds. Eight days later occurs the episode of Thomas, in which this sceptical disciple is confronted with the facts and asked to behold the wounds and to touch them with his finger and his hand. Finally, in a chapter that was added to the gospel later, we find a scene in Galilee: the apparition of Jesus on the shore of the lake of Tiberias and the restoration of Peter to the apostleship.[8]

[5] Acts i, 12.

[6] The apparition of Jesus to the women at the tomb, reported by Matthew, does not invalidate this remark; we observe, indeed, that its sole object is to arrange the meeting with the disciples *in Galilee.*

[7] John xx.

[8] *Ibid.,* xxi.

"According to the Galilean tradition," says Stapfer, "the Risen One has but an ephemeral life and makes only brief appearances. According to the Jerusalemite tradition, on the contrary, the life of the Risen One is the continuation pure and simple of his earthly life. The latter, interrupted for a space of thirty-six hours, has begun again as it was before. The days of the Resurrection are days supplementary to those of the earthly ministry of Jesus and must be added to it. This ministry continues. There are, it is true, two differences: Jesus is not constantly present and he is not always recognisable. He is transported in an instant from one spot to another; he appears and disappears; but he has the same body that was laid in the tomb, the body that had died on the cross and become a corpse. This body, this physical organism, has become alive; it eats and drinks; it walks. Jesus, risen from the dead, has conversations with his apostles, just as in former times.

"It is interesting to observe that this Jerusalemite version of the tradition becomes continually more affirmative in regard to a materialisation of the body of Jesus. We can easily follow the steps which it takes in this direction. When the apostles see Jesus for the first time, they believe they are seeing a spirit (Luke xxiv, 37). But Jesus speaks to them; he replies in advance to their objections and finally eats the fish and the honey before them. This continuation of the Master's life with them lasts just forty days; the number is determined and, at the final appearance, the material body of Jesus leaves the earth and ascends to heaven, to the abode of God, who is above, in the blue sky, beyond the clouds. From this day forward Jesus is never seen again. He is no longer present corporeally on the earth. Hitherto he has been so, but hence-

forth he is seated in heaven, at the right hand of God, and he is not to return till the Last Judgment." [9]

As we reread attentively and with an unbiased mind *all* the evangelical accounts of the Resurrection and the appearances which followed it, this is certainly the impression that dominates us. With the best will to find a harmony among them, we cannot in all sincerity escape from the contradictions in detail. We have a strong feeling that these appearances, accepted at first with the enthusiasm of surprise and emotion, very quickly and quite naturally, in fact, became the object of criticism. And to reply to the objections of those about them the faithful emphasised the features which made of the body of Jesus a material body. They were told what they themselves had said to the women who came to give them the news: "You have been dreaming; it is a vision." They replied by supporting their inner certitude with arguments of fact. Hence the Jerusalemite tradition, born in an environment that was in more frequent contact with the world and the very tenor of which proves it to be of later origin. It seems likely that in the beginning the accounts of the appearances did not dwell particularly on the materiality of the body of Jesus, that they dwelt rather on the reality of his presence. The Galilean tradition has an air of candour that inspires more confidence.

It remains exceedingly, almost insurmountably, difficult to harmonise the accounts that have come down to us in such a way as to discover exactly what took place. But in addition to the reasons which we have for preferring the accounts, or the portions of accounts, that do not insist on the materiality of the body of Jesus or the resurrection of the flesh, we have a still more peremptory reason. I am referring to the *testimony of Saint Paul*, whose epistles are, as we must not forget, of an earlier date than the

[9] STAPFER, op. cit., III, pp. 245-247.

gospels and who also presents himself as a witness of the Resurrection of Jesus. In the first epistle to the Corinthians does he not say in these unmistakable words: "He was seen of me also"? [10] And this affirmation is all the more important since it is the only one that comes from an eye-witness. In the gospels we have the echo of what the apostles said; Saint Paul relates what he saw himself; and he relates it in the year 57, that is to say, before any of the gospels had been committed to writing.

Now what does Saint Paul say? In the first place, he stoutly affirms the Resurrection, the fact of the Resurrection itself. "If Christ be not risen," he goes so far as to proclaim, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God." [11] "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." [12] He is not content with affirming this, he also mentions the appearances, citing six of them: (1) to Peter; (2) to the Twelve; (3) to more than five hundred brethren; (4) to James; (5) to all the apostles, and (6) "last of all," he says, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles." [12a]

The fact of the Resurrection is thus well attested by Paul. But what does he mean by it? Does he refer to appearances of the body which Jesus had before his death? Not at all. In the same chapter Paul protests forcibly and in a perfectly explicit manner against those who assert that the dead rise again with the body which they possessed on earth: "Thou fool," he says, "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain,

[10] I Cor. xv, 8.
[11] *Ibid.*, 14-15.
[12] *Ibid.*, 20.
[12a] *Ibid.*, 5-9.

it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." [13] "Now this I say, brethren," he adds a little further on, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." [14]

The apparition with which Paul was favoured, and which was no doubt that on the road to Damascus, must therefore be understood in this sense. Paul did not see the material body of the Saviour, but he was convinced of his personal presence. For the rest, this is in perfect accord with the accounts of the conversion of Paul in the book of the Acts, Chaps. IX, XXII, and XXVI, and with the passage in the epistle to the Galatians which is often mistranslated: "It pleased God to reveal his son *in me*" (*τὸν δἰὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί*).[15] Paul, in Chapter XV of the first epistle to the Corinthians, establishes a striking parallel between the Resurrection of Jesus and that of the other dead who will be raised again to a new life. There is no difference in nature between the one and the others; it is the same thing.

But how does he represent this to himself? It appears, as we read the passage in question, that he pictures the risen Jesus, and for that matter those who will rise after him as well, as in possession of a "spiritual body." This expression is recorded in 1 Cor. xv, 41 and 45. It is true that, in the last analysis, this expression does not teach us very much, containing, as it does, a contradiction in terms. May we not, however, from the very fact that Paul falls into a contradiction in terms as soon as he tries to express his experience, deduce some indication of the nature of this experience? It seems to me that we may.

[13] I Cor. xv, 37-38.
[14] *Ibid.*, 50.
[15] Gal. i, 15.

The apostle wished to account for the quasi-corporeal reality of this presence of Christ, and yet he knew (and how strongly he affirms it!) that no question of *flesh and blood* was involved. The expression "spiritual body" is an attempt to approximate to this experience, in which the material language of sensations becomes unfit for the rendering at once of the reality of the fact and its spirituality. If there is a contradiction in the terms, it is because all the expressions which we have at our disposal for the rendering of reality are impregnated with our own confusion of reality and materiality.[16]

We must therefore conclude that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is for Saint Paul a fact, but a fact of the spiritual order, that it is for him an incontestable reality, though in no sense material. In short, the experience of Saint Paul is much more closely related to the Galilean tradition than to the Jerusalemite tradition. And considering that his testimony is the earliest in date, this is of great importance for the interpretation of what took place.

Such are the various reports which we possess concern-

[16] The passage in the epistle to the Colossians (ii, 9), "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (σωματικῶς)" does not seem to me to alter the case, for Paul is unquestionably speaking here of Christ glorified, a Christ to whom one must *attach* oneself, in whom one must *root* oneself, by whom one must be edified (see ii, 6-7), and thus of an entirely spiritual Christ. The adverb "bodily" cannot therefore be taken in a carnal sense. Again, in the passage Philip. iii, 21, in which the apostle speaks of the "glorious body" of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to be observed that a *glorious body* in the sense in which Saint Paul meant it has nothing to do with a body of flesh; the passage I Cor. xv, 39-50 shows this admirably. Even if we refer to the first epistle to the Thessalonians (I Thess. iv, 13-18) which dates from a period when Paul was still expecting the return of Christ upon earth, we find no expressions that point to a resurrection of the flesh. The dead will rise first, says Saint Paul (iv, 16), but he does not say in what form; then "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. . . ." But here again there is no precise statement, at any rate no affirmation, regarding a participation of the flesh in this ascension in the air. Saint Paul still remained, perhaps instinctively, vague in regard to this matter. Later, when it became definite, his thought was strictly spiritualistic.

ing the Resurrection of Jesus. We have tried to present, as rapidly and summarily as possible, their substance and value. What emerges from the event itself?

§ 2. THE EVENT

"The statements of Saint Paul," says Stapfer,[17] "help us to choose between the two evangelical traditions of which we have spoken above; for certain it is that between these two traditions we must choose."

We shall not go quite as far as that, or rather we shall go further, but in a somewhat different direction from that of Stapfer. It does not seem to us that in the present state of the question the traditions to which we have alluded have been sufficiently delimited for a choice to be useful or even desirable. It is true that we can discern a very clear tendency to materialise the appearances and make of the Resurrection an event that is physical first and foremost. Certain statements of the apostles, placed side by side with those of Saint Paul, render this very evident. But does it follow that we are obliged, or even able, to make a choice? We do not think so. The accounts as we have them are precious because in a certain sense they indicate the evolution of the psychology of the Christian group; in this respect their very confusion constitutes a precious element of knowledge, and the respective ages of the documents also mark clearly the way in which the development took place. We have, in fact, in the accounts of the Resurrection, not only the affirmation of an event, but also and especially the testimony as to the manner in which this event was understood, its progressive and relatively very rapid perversion through the subconscious factors that are ceaselessly at work in the human soul.

[17] STAPFER, op. cit., III, p. 264.

We must therefore guard against making a choice and thus excluding elements that are too useful to be eliminated. It is much better to accept the accounts *en bloc,* distinguish the currents that reveal themselves in them, and seek to understand this movement and its underlying causes.

At the outset, then, and at the base of these accounts, we cannot fail to recognise that there exists a fact of the highest grandeur in the spiritual sphere. He whom they believed dead is alive: that is the experience of the disciples. "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," [18] exclaims Saint Paul. And all unite in recognising that in this resides the very essence and substance of the Christian faith. It is useless to return to what has been said, and well said, many times, in this connection. The life of the Christian community, the change in the attitude of the disciples, the rapid development of the Church, its extension and its missionary work would remain inexplicable save for some spiritual event of the first importance that had revolutionised the whole psychology of the first believers and transformed them completely. This event, according to their own testimony, was *the Resurrection of Jesus Christ,* the certitude of his life, to which death has not put an end, the contact that has been effected between himself and them in such a way as to leave no room for doubt on their part.

This supremely joyous and inspiring experience of the triumph of life over death, of the reality of the Resurrection, an experience purely spiritual in its basis, was soon buried beneath the mass of accretions which the representations of the senses immediately add to moral realities and which fasten upon them almost by force. No doubt it was impossible that it should have been otherwise. This

[18] Gal. ii, 20.

sensible support of a spiritual reality was probably indispensable from the beginning. The apparitions, whatever they may have been, and even if one regards them as simple hallucinations, could not have failed to occur as physical concomitants of the powerful experience that invaded the whole personality of the disciples at that time. We shall not try to settle the question, realising as we do that our knowledge of the nature of matter, as well as of the apparition of phantoms, spirits, the disembodied is still insufficient to allow of clear and definite conclusions. We shall merely remark that the projection into sensible paths of a spiritual emotion of such a magnitude would amply suffice to create the corresponding visual, auditory, or motor hallucinations. The "spiritual body" of Saint Paul and the fugitive and fleeting apparitions of the Galilean tradition would find a sufficient explanation in this.

Very quickly, however, the need for a physical equivalent of the spiritual impression, which already appears here, became still more accentuated. People rapidly came to connect the spiritual fact of the Resurrection not merely with the vision of a body but with the very substance of this body. To believe they claimed not only that they had seen Jesus and heard him but that they had made certain that the body which he had was actually his old body, the corpse that had been laid in the sepulchre. They would have it that the *flesh* had participated in the Resurrection. This is the second stratum in the accounts of the Resurrection, in which Saint Paul participates in no way whatever, but of which we already find traces in Saint John and Saint Luke.

How explain this development in the accounts, which already constitutes a perversion? While the problem is almost insoluble from the critical point of view, it is not so psychologically. One might suggest as the cause of this

materialistic evolution in the conception of the Resurrection the *Jewish ideas* according to which a soul could not be understood without a body. It is undeniable that the Jews had difficulty in representing the existence of a soul independently of the body which was its support and habitation. But the tendency which we observe here is not exclusively Jewish; it is human; it is one of the most constant tendencies of the psychology of the subconscious. To transform a spiritual fact into a material fact is precisely the course of procedure that has been observed in the progress of a great number of neuroses. This tendency counterbalances the effort of sublimation that is ceaselessly suggested to the consciousness, and offers, in place of this effort, a physiological substitute; or rather it diverts, by means of physical movements that cost no effort whatever, the flight towards life that has been checked.

But let us be more definite. The following process has been found to be at the base of many neuroses. The patient, because of the very circumstances of his life, has been obliged to repress certain tendencies, certain impulses of his deepest nature which have not comported with his environment, with morality or accepted opinions. Henceforth all these things have been concealed from the light of day; but they have remained alive in the depths of the subconscious sanctuary and, not being able to manifest themselves in words or actions, have adopted a roundabout path which is precisely that of the body, the purely physical life. They manifest themselves outwardly under the form of a nervous crisis, a gesture incessantly repeated, a tic, an unconscious movement that recurs at fixed intervals. It goes without saying that the sufferer is completely ignorant of the relation that exists between his crisis, his habit, his tic, and his spiritual life; and yet this relation is real. In order to avoid realising the representations that distress

him or obsess him, the neurotic has *projected*[19] them unconsciously into his body, into the material mechanism of his organism; they are thus condensed into a gesture, or, as sometimes happens, into a physical crisis that returns periodically; and this purely physical issue that has been given to the spiritual forces relieves him in a way by dispensing him from returning to his preoccupations and applying his mind to them. This sort of *transposition of a moral problem into a bodily illness* which forms the basis of certain neuroses is a manifestation of the congenital indolence of man when he is faced with the task of solving personally serious problems of the spiritual order. He follows here the line of least resistance; and rather than suffer by allowing himself to become clearly aware of what he is and what he lacks, or by undertaking an act of courage or revolt against his environment, he allows the combats of the spirit to be transposed in terms of the flesh and thus eludes them.

I cannot do otherwise than connect these facts on the origin of neuroses with the psychic process which we have just seen at work in the elaboration of the accounts of the Resurrection. Something analogous, or at least approaching the analogous, has taken place here. The same psychological laws appear to be at work. Men, sinful and spiritually lazy, found themselves faced with a death and a Resurrection whose spiritual import was such that they could not dispense themselves from a personal and laborious participation in it. This drama reverberated to the very depths of their hearts. It constituted an unanswerable appeal to their consciences. To plunge to the bottom of

[19] On the phenomenon of projection, see: FERENCZI, *Introjektion und Uebertragung, eine psychol. Studie.* Jahrbuch f. psychoanal. Forschungen, I, 1910.—MOREL, F., *Essai sur l'introversion mystique.* Geneva, 1918.—PFISTER, O., *Die psychanalytische Methode* (under the word *Projektion* in the index).—Cf. also FREUD, *Zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens.* Berlin, Karger, 1912, 4th ed., pp. 198.

this spiritual fact: the glorious and triumphant life of Jesus, following his ignominious death,—was to be unable to resist his example and the contagion of his example, it was to commit oneself whole-heartedly to the paths of sacrifice and to accept in earnest the death of the self that wins life. But what renunciations lie along that path, what a sustained effort of sublimation for all the instincts! It required the flinging of one's whole personality into the struggle, as if one's life were at stake; it required the risking of one's self in order to live.

I do not say that this inward struggle was conscious among the first Christians; on the contrary, it was not so,[20] and it was by yielding instinctively to the law of least resistance that they soon began to project the drama of the death and Resurrection of Christ into the physical realm, to restrict and relegate it to the corporeal, to turn it into a material and organic process which one could henceforth limit oneself to contemplating from the outside without living it.

This tendency, for the rest, is to be found throughout the whole course of the ecclesiastical evolution. The Church has unceasingly transposed the spiritual into the physical, well knowing that this transposition is more pleasing to the masses and attracts them more than the bare and sober spiritual reality. It was thus that people arrived at the worship of relics and the veneration of holy bodies, which dispense one from inquiring into the lives of the saints and making an effort to imitate them in order to realise in oneself the process by which these lives became remarkable and strong.

We thus discover in the tendency that little by little lays stress upon the revivification of the body and the flesh

[20] Neuropaths are no more conscious of what is taking place in them or of the psychic and moral origins of their illness.

while gradually allowing the spiritual Resurrection to sink into the shadow, the same psychic forces at work, or rather the same inhibitions and the same passivity, as those which become morbid in the neuroses and create those abnormal states from which so many people are suffering to-day. The human spirit recoils before the moral effort and the spiritual labour that are demanded by the actually lived death and Resurrection. Ardently solicited by the life, death, and Resurrection of Christ to enter upon the path of an actual spiritual realisation of these great facts, man is impeded and held back by all the resistances of his egoism and indolence, and by all the obstacles which the world and the things of the world accumulate along his way. Thus, by an unconscious subterfuge, he shifts the force of his desire into a roundabout path, that of materialisation; he converts into an act of the body that which ought to have flowered in an act of the spirit. He proclaims the Resurrection of a body, the body of Jesus Christ, which is, after all, as foreign to him as the body of the neurotic is foreign to the sufferer during his crises—instead of entering into a direct spiritual communion with the spirit of the dead and risen Christ and living spiritually that which this communion implies. He diverts into an outward gesture that is independent of his will, the energies that should have made him live; and, repressing the obligation to die and rise again after the example of his Saviour and with him, the Christian gives himself the spectacle of the Resurrection of Christ as a physical fact that is, in consequence, foreign to his own person and performed outside it.

In clinging to the bodily Resurrection of Jesus, in short, we simply reject and remove from ourselves an act in which our spirit ought to take part, so to speak, biologically. We cut off the communion with the Christ who died and rose again in newness of life, in the same way that the neurotic

cuts off the living and conscious communion with his body and allows it to act in the manner of a machine which has escaped from his conscious control. In this way we tend to make of the Resurrection of Jesus a drama that takes place outside the life of the Spirit and beside it, a tragedy exclusively symbolical in character in which it is no longer necessary to participate oneself and which develops its effects in the world without our co-operation. The Resurrection thus becomes a pure spectacle for contemplation which veils from us the spiritual reality and prevents its fulfilment—exactly as the crises or the frequently ridiculous tics of the neurotics represent physically an extremely important moral drama which they also dissemble by diverting it along lower paths where it is transformed into a meaningless gesture.

The drama of a life that was played imaginatively outside the personality, the creation of a physical symbol that exempted one from living the reality—this was what the Mystery-Religions had presented to souls that were thirsting for concrete reality. Deeply engraved upon all the myths of the dead and risen gods of antiquity we find this fallacious fulfilment of human desire. And this same tendency to replace life by the game of life, the action by the spectacle, has continued to operate in the human mind since the career of Jesus just as it did before. It has been perceptible in the Christian Church from the very beginning; hence it is not surprising that such a theologian as Strauss, examining the accounts of the Resurrection in the gospels and finding in them thus early the first lineaments of this psychic tendency, should have concluded that it was a *myth* and reduced the whole story of the Resurrection of Jesus to a mythical construction.

What can we reply to this contention and the arguments upon which it is founded? We can reply with a great fact

that is historic. It is this: that the life, the death, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ put an end to the creation of the divine myths of death and resurrection. This fact, which may easily be demonstrated and is amply supported by evidence, constitutes a peremptory and decisive argument. Before Jesus Christ the human soul was perpetually recreating, under constantly new and always insufficient forms, myths that endeavoured to express and symbolise, even while they perverted it, its incessantly reborn aspiration. It had to have saviour-gods who died and returned to life: Attis, Dionysus, Cybele, Isis. With Jesus Christ this creation of the imagination definitely ceased. The Resurrection of Christ put an end, among the peoples who had known him, to all the myths of resurrection.

Does not this mean that the unsatisfied need of the human soul had found here its full and entire satisfaction, and that ever since then spirits in quest of a new birth who have sought it sincerely have found it in spiritual contact with Jesus Christ, dead and risen? The need of an immortal life and the desire for a new birth which have tormented the subconsciousness of the human soul and deluded it by symbolising death and resurrection in myths in which invented gods have played before men the inner tragedy of the spirit—this need and this desire have been fulfilled biologically. A man has lived through, has realised in the bald verity of facts, in the web of action, decision, feeling, this psychic process of death to self and resurrection which hitherto people have only succeeded in describing in poetic imagery and ritualistic symbols. Henceforth, there is no longer a reason for inventing imaginary substitutes, for eluding the imperious psychic demand for the death of the ego and its effective rebirth by projecting its principal features into an invented story in such a way that one may escape them and rid oneself of them. The realisation has

embodied itself in facts; people can see it is alive, they can feel it is alive, that soul of Christ which has passed through the death that he accepted. Jesus put an end to the myths of the saviour-gods because he lived through the moral and psychic reality which the myths of death and resurrection expressed in the language of symbolism. The very fact of the complete decadence of the contemporaneous religions proves that humanity no longer needed them, that it possessed henceforth in Christ the spiritual reality of which, in the preceding cults, it had had but the shadow.

In opposition to Strauss, we shall insist then, in the name of the very facts of history, that something was changed by the death and the Resurrection of Christ. The incessant mythical elaboration, that symptom of the anxiety of perpetually unsatisfied souls, is arrested. And one myth added to the others has never produced this result. Thus there must have been something here that was different from a myth and more than a myth: a response to the deepest inner needs of the soul, a fulfilment of its restless search, the realisation of the process of life for which it has sighed.

The Resurrection of Christ, the reality of his glorious and triumphant life, is and remains, in this sense, the certitude that has overthrown all the idolatries by implanting in the very heart of humanity the faith in the possibility of a life that is victorious even over death. It is because the disciples knew that Jesus Christ was alive after they had seen him die that they were able later to desire, in the very substance of their spiritual life, the successive deaths to oneself which create life; it is thanks to this that Christians, instead of merely introducing a *new cult* into the world, have infused a *new life* into the veins of humanity.

But Strauss was not entirely wrong. Along with the Resurrection and the affirmation of the Resurrection, the

accounts of the gospels also contain an incipient myth, the beginnings of a mythological construction that is born again here, so true it is that the human spirit never entirely loses its bad habits and that the disastrous tendencies of the soul always return. The doctrine of the Resurrection of the body and the flesh is nothing else than the myth which tends to reappear in opposition to the spiritual reality, and that in the very bosom of the religion which gave the death-blow to the pagan myths; it is the play-drama as opposed to the drama which must be lived spiritually and in which one must take part personally, the spectacle preferred to the combat in which one risks one's person. Through Jesus Christ the death and the new birth became the flesh and blood of humanity, but the resistance has grown equally with the revelation. Rather than pass oneself through this death and this birth one will relegate them to the individual body of him who first realised them; one will set them aside and outside humanity and Christ will bear off the victory without humanity and for it, in its place and not in it.

Jesus gave himself entirely to men; he is dead but he lives; through him and in him one can, then, by dying, live also. But to evade this communion of the spirit, which is a struggle, a torture, a death followed by the crowning of life, to evade risking itself in the adventure, human nature invents a subterfuge and substitutes a physical magic for the communion of the spirit. It returns, by a detour, to the old myth. In this Strauss was right. The insistence on the resurrection of the body in the gospel accounts is a return, in the Christian field, to the tendency of the myth, an atavistic revival of a state of the spirit which Christianity ought to have abolished, but which it has not yet entirely eliminated.

It is also a way of ridding oneself of the spiritual Christ

—who sweeps one along the paths of sacrifice towards the life of the spirit with its struggles and its renunciations—by substituting for this living Christ a deformed and materialised image, a mythical figure in which the corpse on the cross, the wounds, and that same flesh, brought back to life and ascending into heaven, play the great rôle.[21] To avoid participating in a death and a resurrection which are meaningless unless we realise them ourselves, in ourselves, through Christ—to escape this spiritual test which passes through sacrifice before attaining to glory, our indolent dream invents a special body, a miraculous flesh which alone could escape corruption and, also alone, return to life—a spectacle, in short, in which it is sufficient to believe and in which we are exempted from taking part. Jesus is thus uprooted from humanity like a foreign body the presence of which causes suffering to our too delicate spirit. When we content ourselves with believing[22] in the resurrection of his flesh, we separate ourselves from him as from an exceptional being; we dispense ourselves from suffering what he suffered, from willing what he willed, from being born into his life by dying his death. We create for ourselves a morbid Christianity in which the acts and gestures of a holy body replace for us the processes of the spirit. And we do not perceive that, like the neurotics, we have turned aside along the paths of the physical organism and reduced to a mere symbolic imitation the very adventure of life that has required the whole of us for its service.

No! The Resurrection of Jesus does not signify the return of a carnal body to life that it may later ascend to heaven just as it is; it does not signify an invasion of

[21] See, in this connection, the repulsive details of a certain very fervent type of piety in PFISTER, *Die Frömmigkeit des Grafen Ludwig von Zinzendorf*. Leipzig, Deuticke, 1910, pp. 122.

[22] With a purely intellectual belief.

heaven by the flesh. What we have here is rather the first spiritual life that ever triumphed over the obstacles and the barriers of the flesh and that comes to add its energies to ours so as to open to us the way to this triumph and render it possible. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the new birth realised and made glorious in the heart of men so that they, in their turn, may have the strength and courage to hazard the death of themselves, knowing that life lies beyond.

Let us draw a practical conclusion. For a whole category of Christians, of whom we find to-day representatives equally in Catholic orthodoxy and Protestant orthodoxy, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has become a belief which, when it comes to the point, exempts one from undergoing oneself the tragedy of a personal death and resurrection. To such minds as these, the Resurrection is nothing but a *material fact* which, in its time, demonstrated the intervention of the power of God in the order of material facts. God brought a corpse back to life two thousand years ago. As we were not witnesses of this, it is enough for us, in order to be Christians, to believe that it happened, to cleave to this fact with a purely intellectual belief. We still know, in our own day, great numbers of people who consider that to be a Christian consists in just this, and that it is enough to admit that certain material events really took place in order to receive the benefit of the promises of life. A very paltry, a singularly mean idea to form of God!

As for ourselves, we believe that it is impossible even to conceive what the Resurrection of Christ signifies without having, to a certain degree, experienced what it is to die with him. He reveals himself as living only to those who have, in some way, gone down with him to death, to those who have at least vibrated to the emotions and the experiences through which he passed. One will never suc-

ceed in feeling what the true Resurrection is save along this road. To turn the Resurrection into a fact of the material order is thus to misunderstand its nature; it is to choose the symbol in preference to the reality. On the other hand, by dying to oneself, by following the Christ who bears his cross even to Golgotha, one becomes capable, little by little, of feeling him and knowing him as alive. Strive as one may to attain to this through an effort of belief, one only succeeds in affirming a material fact which of itself changes nothing and contributes nothing to life. It is not by believing in the Resurrection of the flesh that we can become new beings; it is only by experiencing the life of him with whom and in whose footsteps one desires to die daily.

The experience of the Resurrection of Christ is perhaps the supremely triumphant and the most powerful of the Christian experiences, but it is not the affirmation of a material fact; it is the irrevocable testimony of a spiritual contact which takes place only along the path of death to self. To affirm that it is anything else is to prevent oneself from feeling it, and those who believe that it is so are often the furthest from experiencing its vital value.

I do not mean by this to deny that there exist orthodox Christians who are also living Christians. On the contrary; but if they are such it is not in virtue of their belief in the material fact of the Resurrection but rather because, aside from this belief, they have lived in direct communion with Christ and have passed with him through that death which leads to life. Unfortunately, there are others who, inheriting from their co-religionists only the belief without the experience, firmly uphold the material fact of the Resurrection without ever having known what it was to die and return to life, because they have been content to believe without living, without passing through the vital experiences

that make a Christian of a man. It is these who are to be pitied since they are the victims of that sort of neurosis of the religious sentiment which transmutes into objects of belief acts of life that might be called, in a certain sense, duties of the Spirit, in the accomplishment of which one meets face to face Him who is eternally alive and becomes oneself alive.

What, then, is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ? We may define it as *an experience of life,* and by this we mean an experience through which one passes *as a living being,* which attests itself in one not through an effort of thought or will or through an exaltation of the emotions, but through the opening of the whole being to a new life along the very path of the gift of self and the death to self. Thus it is only by returning to life oneself, by acceding to the new life of the Spirit, that one truly learns, that one knows that Christ is living. And this indeed was the Pentecost which made of the apostles living beings and conquerors.

It is therefore not outside life, or beside it, that we seek our certitudes of faith. But, having faith in life, we do not avoid the struggles and the deaths to which it leads us, and we find, in the bloody combat which confronts us, Him who first braved this combat, more alive than ever, and present in the innermost consciousness of the personality which we have surrendered and found again.

END OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

APPENDIX

THE POETRY OF JESUS

Let us define first of all what we mean by the poetry of Jesus. We are not speaking of the poetry that surrounds like a golden nimbus the stories of the gospels, or that which drifts about the manger and the wise men or whispers like a soft breeze round the peaceful house at Bethany or under the palms and in the gardens of Jericho. It is not the poetry that surrounded Jesus Christ of which I should like to speak here, but that which he had in his heart, the intuition that made him observe the charm of these things and, while conferring on them a new meaning, engraved them forever in the memory of his disciples.

For Jesus, whatever else may be thought of him, was a poet, a marvellous poet. Let it be understood that in making this assertion I am not attempting to write poetry myself; I am simply attempting to state a fact, a fact which, in my eyes, is of great importance.

What, in reality, is it to be a poet? It does not consist, as some people think, in composing impeccable verses on this or that subject; there are great poets who have never written a phrase in verse. Nor is it to be able to produce magnificent tales in a cadenced and rhythmic prose. There are undoubtedly great poets, perhaps the greatest of all, who have never written or published a line.

To be a poet is to feel in a certain manner the realities that surround one; it is to possess in oneself that divine sense which makes one perceive intense harmonies, by turns joyous and solemn, stamped with a religious sublimity or

with a mysterious grandeur, in everything that arouses or attracts one's attention. A poet is a man who feels the Universe taking life within himself, who sees in the spectacle of everyday existence the reflection of higher verities which the human eye hardly dares to contemplate.

Jesus was a poet in this sense, more of a poet and a better poet than the greatest of men. He possessed as no one else has possessed the intuition of those underlying harmonies that reconcile all things in the majestic unity of God. He felt as no one else has felt the unspeakable joy of those harmonies and that rhythm, as well as the poignant tragedy that sometimes springs out of them. Some of this radiant and sublime poetry found expression in the name of Father which he taught us to pronounce and to give to God. By following him along the shining paths he trod one learns to rid oneself of the artificial and factitious poetry of words and to know the true poetry, that which animates life with a breath of sincerity and infuses into it the divine, consoling forces.

The ages of life do not all have the same poetry. The child plunges into nature; he lives in it, communes with it in a way of his own and with a calm unconsciousness which makes of this communion so serene and so beautiful a reality that one never finds anything like it again. The child floats in a *lyric* world.

Later, as he reaches the age of responsibilities, man draws closer to his brothers and lives the *epic* of the heroes of humanity. The poems which he then enjoys are those that tell of man and his deeds of valour.

Then, when the hour for personal action approaches, the hour when he must show what he is worth and participate in the human task, it seems as if the poetry of other days had been effaced to make room for realities that are all too real. But as he that has eyes can easily see, it

has only left the domain of the imagination to return in deeds and actions. Man then lives his destiny, and he lives it tragically. *Tragedy* watches, fully armed, at his side and speaks to him in its dramatic, richly coloured voice.

The lyricism of nature, the epic of life, the drama of the last moments and the cross: one finds in Jesus these three ages of poetry. He lived them with splendid intensity and power. It is because we are too accustomed to the stories of the gospels that we do not catch the splendour of this poetry in them. But it is enough for our attention to be drawn to this characteristic of the life of Jesus for the words to leap before our eyes as we turn to them again, for the whole story, read and reread so many times, to sing to us like a new poem.

Listen, all you who are heavy laden, you who are tired of life! You walk with bowed heads bent over your daily task. You are disgusted with your brother men and their doings. You no longer have the eyes you had as children.

Well, come, let us go forth for a moment and follow Jesus. Behold him there! It is himself. He is walking in that calm and radiant countryside of Palestine. He advances to the shore of the lake. The fishermen are mending their nets on the beach. He looks at them, and suddenly a shaft of light unites for him the slow and measured gestures of these swarthy men toiling in the hot sun with the great work that fills his heart. "Come ye after me," he says to them, "and I will make you to become *fishers of men.*"

Yonder on the rim of the horizon, an Oriental town, a white town, outlines on the edge of the sky the bluish shadow of its houses. One sees it, whatever one may be doing. Every time Jesus lifts his head it is there before him. It becomes an obsession to him. Since its white

houses fix his attention in this way, no doubt this town has a message for him from God. He wonders, he looks, he listens . . . at last he has found it; and when he returns to the village he bears in his heart, like a treasure, the secret of a new revelation for his disciples. The next day he will say to them: "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel. Ye are the light of the world." [1]

Mornings have passed and evenings also. To-day he is going to leave men and the sounds of toil behind him. He feels the need of solitude and meditation. His steps lead him to the fields; he moves on, brushing with his sandals the tall grasses starred with numberless red and violet anemones. Here and there the meadow lilies, deliciously white and velvety, open like a secret perfume. Under the last rays of the late sun the wide brow of the Master bends. Of a sudden he sees these flowers, all these flowers that seem to have sprung up about him by magic. A moment ago, lost in his reflections, he was thinking of his disciples, of their difficulties, the hardships of their life. Now, escaping from this dialogue with himself, he contemplates what the Father has placed beneath his feet. In the deep silence of the country a bird is singing; and while twilight falls softly the Master returns with a slower step. To-morrow he will tell these toiling men of their good fortune; he will say: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. . . . Are ye not much better than they?" [2]

[1] Matt. v, 14-15.
[2] Matt. vi, 25-31.

Behold him again, in the streets of Capernaum. He is passing with his disciples. There is a sudden brawl, a shout. A band of youngsters are dashing into a neighbouring alley. Jesus has raised his eyes. Through a half-open doorway he sees in the obscurity of a poor room the father standing, about to cut a loaf of bread. Four or five children's heads and as many pairs of eyes are turned towards the coveted treasure, and hands are being raised in a beam of sunlight. It is only a flash, this vision, a momentary glimpse, but Jesus has seen the raised hands and the father's smile. "Ask," he says, turning towards his disciples, "and it shall be given you. What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" [3]

Jesus has observed so many things. He has known the little paths, faintly traced, that climb the slopes of the hills to the wonderful views; has known their charm and the emptiness of the big dusty highways that lead to the noisy, corrupt cities.[4]

He has felt the desolation of those clusters of reeds bent by the wind in the solitudes: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" [5]

What, in short, has he not contemplated in the richness of his vision, from the sower, sweeping his arm in a magnificent gesture over the fields,[6] to that woman, bending over the kneading-trough and hiding her leaven in the three measures of meal,[7] from the tares that mingle their roots with those of the wheat [8] to that net which strong arms

[3] Matt. vii, 7-11.
[4] *Ibid.*, 13-14.
[5] Matt. xi, 7.
[6] Matt. xiii, 4; Mark iv, 3; Luke viii, 5.
[7] Matt. xiii, 33; Luke xiii, 21.
[8] Matt. xiii, 25.

draw in over the beach to sort the golden and silvery fish.[9]

He has seen all these marvels which did not exist until he had observed them and told us of them. It really seems as if with him one walked in a world as fresh as the world of children. This, as a matter of fact, he knows himself: "I thank thee, O Father, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."[10] It is towards the "lost sheep" that he goes, towards those men and women whose souls have been closed perhaps to the poetry of things and sullied for a time, but who have sought and who now open their hearts to the realities of other days, who have found again the eyes of their childhood at the contact of his own soul with theirs.

This poetry of Jesus is sober. No verbiage, nothing stereotyped, no insipid sentimentality! The beauties of nature, the forms of men, the face of reality, he takes everything just as it is; it is almost the nudity of antique sculpture. Nothing but light clothes these bodies, but this light is everything. Jesus saw the universe in the light of God. With his heart full of the Father, he projected this light of God over the spectacle of the world, and the world was transfigured by it; he set himself to sing the praises of God and he freely uttered all the truth that was in him.

Simplicity, sincerity: here lies the whole secret of this lyricism, the fresh spring of which wells up in the soul of Christ as if in the morning of creation.

But the youth of the heart, the glow of our first ventures only last for a moment; men know this only too well, so

[9] Matt. xiii, 47.
[10] Matt. xi, 25 and 26.

easily do they allow the poetry of their first twenty years to be extinguished in them. After that fresh, confident enthusiasm, they fall victims to the dryness and avarice of the heart of the years that we are accustomed to call, sometimes mistakenly, more reasonable.

Now, life was severe to Jesus; no one will deny that. If any one has ever come in contact with the hard realities of existence, if any one has ever known the bitterness of deceptions and unfulfilled dreams, it is assuredly he. But the obstacles of the road did not stifle the poetry in Jesus as they stifle it in most men; they only caused it to develop; and perhaps that is what should always happen. Under all the blows of existence, through sorrows and difficulties of every sort, Jesus never lost his confidence in life and in Him who directs life; and the reward of this persevering faith in the face of everything was the inexhaustible flow of poetry that never permitted his soul to dry up in discouragement, revolt, or disillusioned scepticism. Where many people believe that, at a certain moment in life, it is suitable and expedient to surrender the confidence and generosity of their past and fling themselves desperately and unreservedly into the bitter struggle, Jesus never cut this golden thread which unites the experiences of the adult to those of the child. On the contrary, every time that the circumstances of life disappointed him or men made him weep or the future threatened him, he returned to the experiences of the past, to the moral realities that he had formerly lived through, and to the infinite poetry that rejoices the heart of the child, and sought strength in them. He did not abandon himself to the sterile dream which drags one back or paralyses one. He charged his soul with the convictions that one acquires in the springtime of life, and he returned to the troubling realities of the present

with a force in himself that was stronger than them all: the immutable certainty of the paternal and reassuring presence which is that of the home of our childhood and the memory of which men allow themselves to lose.

This poetry—for this too is poetry—permeated all his activity as a man working among men; and that is why, when one has learned to read the gospels with the eyes of the Spirit, the face of Jesus suggests no longer the gentle dreamer evoked by Renan but rather the countenance of an epic hero, winning, in the combats of life, marvellous and still unsurpassed victories.

Let us try to surprise in his soul this evolution which, by insensible transitions, led him from the poetry of nature to that of man, to the beauty and the living and luminous earnestness of the active human life. There is no question here of theories; one might write volumes on this subject. What I should like to show is a spectacle: the spectacle of a life which develops while never casting off the royal mantle of poetry with which God, in his infinite bounty, covers every human cradle. But the only way to understand this is to watch Jesus as he lives, to listen while he speaks, and to allow the echo of his words to prolong its mystery within our own hearts.

Behold him once more then! It is in the midst of his career, or, more exactly, just after the first sally, the first emergence into the world of action in which he has generously bestowed upon the people and the crowds that follow him the whole of his youth. He flings it all to them, in armfuls, in thick, clustered sheaves: his affection, his dreams, his confidence, his joy, his convictions, the poetry that has sung in his soul as a valiant youth, the certitudes that have shone from his great open eyes. And now he has returned from the mountain whither so many ears eager to hear, so many hearts anxious to know, have accompanied

him. He is in a synagogue, mingling with the multitude which he loves and pities. There is a stir; they push before him a man with a withered hand. Jesus suddenly understands. To-day is the sabbath. All these eyes that are watching him, these arms impatient to drag the sick man into his presence, these knowing glances that pass from one to another, this dull murmur followed by a sudden silence—it is all the work of a hypocrisy that is spreading its nets, seeking to catch him in a snare, and this amid the joy of the sabbath, on the day consecrated to God when men should love one another. Something seems to rend in the pure soul of Christ, and the rent grows wider and wider. What an awakening! A moment ago there was a perfect communion in the joy of nature: they listened to him, they loved him, they greeted him with hearts full of welcome. Now ice, the chill of falsehood, the torture of the heart recoiling before that fearful thing, deceit, the desire to tempt, incurable spite.

Others would have felt all their hope sink under the shock. But Jesus looks into the past. He sees filing before his heart as a child the scenes of other days, all bathed in the peaceful and tranquillising atmosphere of the Father: the flocks dark against the countryside, the shepherds careful to lose none of their sheep. He listens to the life-bearing truth that comes to him with these memories of the serenity of nature. Is he not also the shepherd of the dark, restive sheep? And then, with his heart beating less violently, instead of replying with a violent gesture to the hatred that mutters about him, he takes this poetry of his childhood which he has found again in the depths of himself, and offers it, as one would offer a bouquet, to those who are trying to destroy him: "How much then is a man better than a sheep!" he says to them. He leads their thoughts back beneath the light of childhood whose eyes

were clear and could see; he tries to make them behold this man with the eyes they had as children.[11]

How many times has he attempted to do this: to restore to this generation, on which he at first counted so much, the clear vision of the divine beauty! And how many times has this generation wounded his heart by refusing to see anything in it! Here again we may say that, in a certain sense, it was poetry that saved Jesus from discouragement; not an artificial poetry that distracts one from life, but the poetry of the Father's work, the angle of beauty from which he perceives this great drama of the struggle that unites all the generations and leads them step by step to judgment. Let us recall, for example, how he sees the Ninevites rising from their tombs to accuse the unbelievers of his time, and the Queen of Sheba, the black queen, who also comes to affirm that there is one here greater than Solomon whose wisdom and glory she had yet come from the uttermost parts of the earth to see.[12]

But these unbelievers, these men who will have none of him, Jesus loves nevertheless. He takes them by the hand and leads them with him back to his own memories of childhood. This poetry of the past will speak to their hearts as it speaks to his own. Are they not like those children playing in the market-place? Some pretend to be drawing sounds from an imaginary flute which they hold between their agile fingers; the others show they have understood the gesture by beginning to dance. The first group plays a funeral dirge; the others catch the idea that a burial is taking place and imitate the tears and lamentations. "And you," Jesus virtually says to them, "you make it a point not to understand the game of life and close your ears to all the invitations that are offered you!" What tact

[11] Matt. xii, 9-13; Mark iii, 1-6; Luke vi, 6-11.
[12] Matt. xii, 38-42; Luke xi, 29-32.

and what touching charm in this poetry of childhood that throws its soft veil over the sad and cruel reality and appeals to the feelings without wounding these sinners to the quick.[13]

This unspeakable love which he feels for them, this agonising desire to save them, Jesus manifests on another day when he makes them the most beautiful gift that a man can make. He gives them all the hidden poetry of the home. Stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he exclaims, "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? Behold my mother and my brethren!" [14] We must be careful not to see in this any sort of easy denial of his family and maternal affection. On the contrary, by installing them as it were in the family of his soul, he gave them all the joy of his childhood, all the affection that had illumined his early years, all that a man expresses when, in the midst of suffering, he allows to escape from his almost unconscious lips the simple word "mother."

The tact that Jesus shows in the appeal, this intimate poetry that colours his whole life we find even in his silences, for there is a poetry of silence and the grandest spectacles render the deepest souls wordless. What a magnificent sermon lies in the simplicity of his attitude before the woman taken in adultery whom they bring before him to be judged! Jesus, stooping down, began to write on the ground with his finger. The woman stood there before him, filled with mortal anguish. Time was running from the hour-glass of eternity. . . . Then, one by one, the accusers, embarrassed, stole away. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." These words burned their hearts. Jesus continued to write on the ground. At last, raising his head, he saw that he was alone with the woman. "Neither do I condemn thee," he said to her. Would it be

[13] Matt. xi, 16-19; Luke 31-35.
[14] Matt. xii, 46-50.

possible to clothe with more poetic grace a judgment that stirred the basest mire, whether in the accused or the accusers? [15]

For the rest, on every occasion when Jesus encounters a woman, a little poem slips into the gospels. We recall Bethany and Martha and Mary,[16] Jacob's well, and the woman of Samaria,[17] the scene in which the unknown woman pours the ointment on his head and that phrase which is so natural and so great: "Why trouble ye her?" [18] Finally, the last word of Christ to his mother as he points out to her the beloved disciple: "Behold thy son." [19]

The intense activity of Jesus, amid strife and suffering of all kinds, that colossal work of appeal and conversion which he carried on for two or three years among the men and women of Palestine, was not tarnished for an instant with the prosaic dryness and the sterile harshness that so often sully the activity of Christians, and sometimes all the more as it increases in devotion. It makes us ask ourselves whence comes, in those who usually undertake good works, that lack of charm in the doing of them. Assuredly it is not from Jesus they have inherited it. He himself scattered poetry over men and through all his work.

Now this new poetry which he brought to the world was little by little reflected in his person. It could not have been otherwise. An event that bears witness to this in the gospels, an event before which we have often paused without understanding it and of which at least a part of the mystery lies in the poetry of Christ, is the Transfiguration.[20] On the mountain whither three disciples had followed him, he was suddenly illumined, permeated, impregnated with

[15] John viii, 1-11.
[16] Luke x, 38-42.
[17] John iv, 1-42.
[18] Mark xiv, 3-9.
[19] John xix, 25-27.
[20] Matt. xvii, 1-8; Mark ix, 2-8; Luke ix, 28-36.

the light with which he had spent his life in flooding men and things. He had always desired to see them through what might be called the poetry of God, in the glory for which God had created them. He had projected upon them all that God had given him of holiness, beauty, truth, justice, the ideal. He had, so to speak, stripped himself of all this glory to make it shine over others. Now that the work is under way, it is necessary that for once at least his companions should see him as he is in the eyes of God, that they should contemplate him irradiated and glorified in the very poetry of heaven.

The Transfiguration is the sudden revelation to common eyes of all the divine poetry that was in Jesus Christ. They saw him and then they fell silent, realising that there was something here which could not be uttered. But henceforth they followed him more faithfully. A little of the dazzling glory which he had had on the mountain clung from this time forward to their Master. They looked upon him differently because the divine splendour had transfigured him in their eyes. Having believed in the magnificence of the universe created by his Father and in the moral beauty of man, in spite of all the disappointments that nature and man had flung in his face, Jesus appeared to his own clad in a dignity and a grandeur that no one will ever surpass.

But tragic hours were approaching. Now, in every tragic hour there is an element of terror and horror that unmans the noblest natures and may destroy them at a blow. One only escapes from the sinister clutch of tragic reality, from the discouragement, the stupor it calls out, by depriving it of its power to kill us or enfeeble us. It is only the poets who know how to make of the tragedy of life an ally instead of an adversary. They alone snatch from the tragic

horror of facts its impassable, its fatal mask and perceive behind this fatality a face: the face of the august and solemn Truth which attracts them by the passionate interest it arouses.

It was in this way that the end, desperate in so many respects, became for Jesus a triumph and an ascension. But this divine metamorphosis of life was not the work of a day. It came about slowly and, under the influence of events, led him from the poetry of nature and childhood to that of the heroic life and the joy that endures even unto death.

The parable of the vineyard [21] initiates us into this last period of his life and this stage of his poetic feeling. One feels that he is pervaded there by a sorrowful certainty, the result of long reflection and a very clear view of the ways in which the Jewish aspirations are opposed to his personal faith and irreconcilable with it. Jesus knows that he will be rejected. The son of the owner of the vineyard will be killed and cast forth from the vineyard, even as the servants have been who preceded him, the prophets and John the Baptist, the latest of them. Henceforth he must advance with the certainty of final failure; and we can imagine the shadows that must have spread over the soul of Jesus as he came to believe this, to know it, to be so sure of it that he could speak of it publicly.

Indeed he cherished no illusions; he saw, better than any one, the mob of the perverse, the lazy, the evil, the indifferent, in the midst of whom he must continue to bear aloft the shining torch. The parables of the talents and the virgins are evidence of this.[22] Sometimes these evil folk appear to him in the proportion of one in three (among the three servants there is one who hides his talent in the

[21] Matt. xxi, 33-46; Mark xii, 1-12; Luke xx, 9-19.
[22] Matt. xxv, 14-30; Luke xix, 11-28; and Matt. xxv, 1-13.

earth), sometimes they seem to him as numerous as the good (there are five foolish virgins to five who are wise; and for that matter, they all fall asleep without exception, the wise and the foolish; not one is able to keep watch).

Thus one feels the circle of iron closing in. Jesus sees the void that is forming about him. The treacherous spider of human hypocrisy is spinning its web about his person. The tragedy is gathering head in the darkness. He feels it approaching in the very person of Judas, who is becoming sullen, in the withdrawal of the deluded multitudes. And what suffers first of all in him is his lovingly patriotic heart. He wishes, before the end, at least to enter his well-loved city in triumph; he wishes to taste, if only for an instant, that poetry of joy of which he has dreamed; and, seated on the royal mount, he solemnly passes through the walls of Jerusalem, uplifted once more by that popular enthusiasm of which he well knows that this is the last outburst. But he also knows that "if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." [23]

Just after this royal progress of Palm Sunday, we observe the emotional reaction that seizes upon him to the very depths of his soul. He looks upon the ramparts of his city, the holy city of God, and upon the Temple yonder shining under the rays of the sun; and from his trembling lips falls that tragic poem which is so touching, so heart-rending: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." [24] Still later, before the walls of the Temple, the solidity of which the disciples have just been observing, he will exclaim: "Verily, I say

[23] Matt. xxi, 1-11; Mark xi, 1-10; Luke xix, 28-44; John xii, 12-19.
[24] Matt. xxiii, 37; Luke xiii, 34.

unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." [25]

Sorrow, we might suppose, a clear vision of what is coming, a prophetic glimpse that can leave in this betrayed heart and this weary soul nothing but the sense of bitter deception and cruel doubt.

So it would seem to human eyes . . . and yet, is that what we find in the sweetness of the last conversations (John xiv-xvii), in the calm with which they make ready for the Supper on the eve of Good Friday, in the serene and joyous authority that presides over the resurrection of Lazarus? No, Jesus was not discouraged by the apparent defeat of his work; for when one has toiled always hand in hand with the Father, it is impossible that one should be deceived. The life which he lives inwardly is truer and stronger than all the lies that are opposed to it by a concrete and, after all, transitory reality. It is only necessary to turn upon the disturbing facts of earth the shining rays of that life, that intimate communion which he has with the Father. Then everything appears in its true light, the dismay vanishes and the song of life asserts itself anew.

Death, his death which is there, which is in preparation in the shadow, which is to come, insidiously and perversely, and surprise him in the midst of his activity, in the midst of his youth, must be, since the Father allows it to come, a means of realising the plans of the Father. Then Jesus, in order to understand the tragedy which awaits him along his path, rereads the ancient tragedy, the poem announcing the Man of Sorrow.[26] He sees filing past him, in a magnificent sequence, all those who have given their lives. His own shall be the crowning of them.

For the rest, must he call this death which awaits him a

[25] Matt. xxiv, 2; Mark xiii, 2; Luke xix, 44 and xxi, 6.
[26] Isaiah liii.

defeat and an end? No, it is a beginning, it is a triumph, it is a joy. Above the sorrow, infinite joy soars like an eagle. He will be the stalk to which all the shoots attach themselves that they may live; he will be the vine that is full of sap and that will henceforth bear up to the light of God the leaves and the fruit, the clusters and the branches. It is from his life that all life will spring, and his sacrifice will give birth to the miracles of which men have need in order to live.[27]

He will be the bread and the wine with which they shall nourish themselves. He will flood them, every one, with the effluvium of life and joy that floods him because he has been made one with God. Little by little, the last great revelation dawns upon his agonised consciousness. It is like a song that fills him entirely, like music that penetrates him, a poem that sweeps him away on its large, abundant rhythm. And strong with the strength of this supreme and tragic poetry that he has found in God, he advances, calm, peaceful, almost joyous, towards the Cross.

One should reread the last discourses which the gospel of John alone has preserved for us. It is to them that we turn instinctively when we have need of consolation, when life has wounded or troubled us. They receive us like maternal arms and their very cadence is like that of some ancient cradle. Can one doubt that these things were said at the distance of a few steps from the cross? Scarcely a veil concealed it now, and for him who spoke it was already there. The tone of these utterances is grave, but what charm they have, what peace, what sweetness!

Contemplating Jesus at this moment, people have spoken of his "acceptance." Acceptance, yes, truly, but not in the sense of a resigned, dejected, passive submission. There is something more than acceptance here; there is a sort

[27] John xv, 1-8.

of grave and joyous accord with the very essence of life and destiny, a poetry that is at once candid, childlike, and conscious, a heroic poetry that uplifts you and bears you over the ocean of Eternity. In fact, this man who is to be crucified to-morrow speaks above all of joy: "Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. . . . Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. . . . If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." It is the joy of fulfilment, that which a woman feels when, through her, another man is born into the world. Jesus had attained, in this moment, to so powerful a realisation of the invisible things, to what one might call so complete an incarnation of the poetry of God, that the joy of the eternal truth effaces the shadows of suffering and drowns them in its light.

Still to come is the cry of Gethsemane, still the few brief, simple words from the cross. But above all the *silence* . . . the silence of this great figure that passes from the palace of Caiaphas and that of Herod, from the pretorium of Pontius Pilate and the court of the soldiers . . . saying nothing, his eyes fixed upon the sovereign realities of the Beyond towards which he leads humanity.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE LIVES OF JESUS

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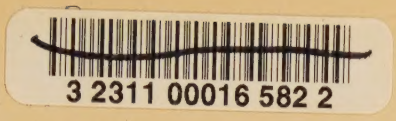

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